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**POST**

SHAVUOT  
MAGAZINE

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*'The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God:  
even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God...' - Psalm 68:3*



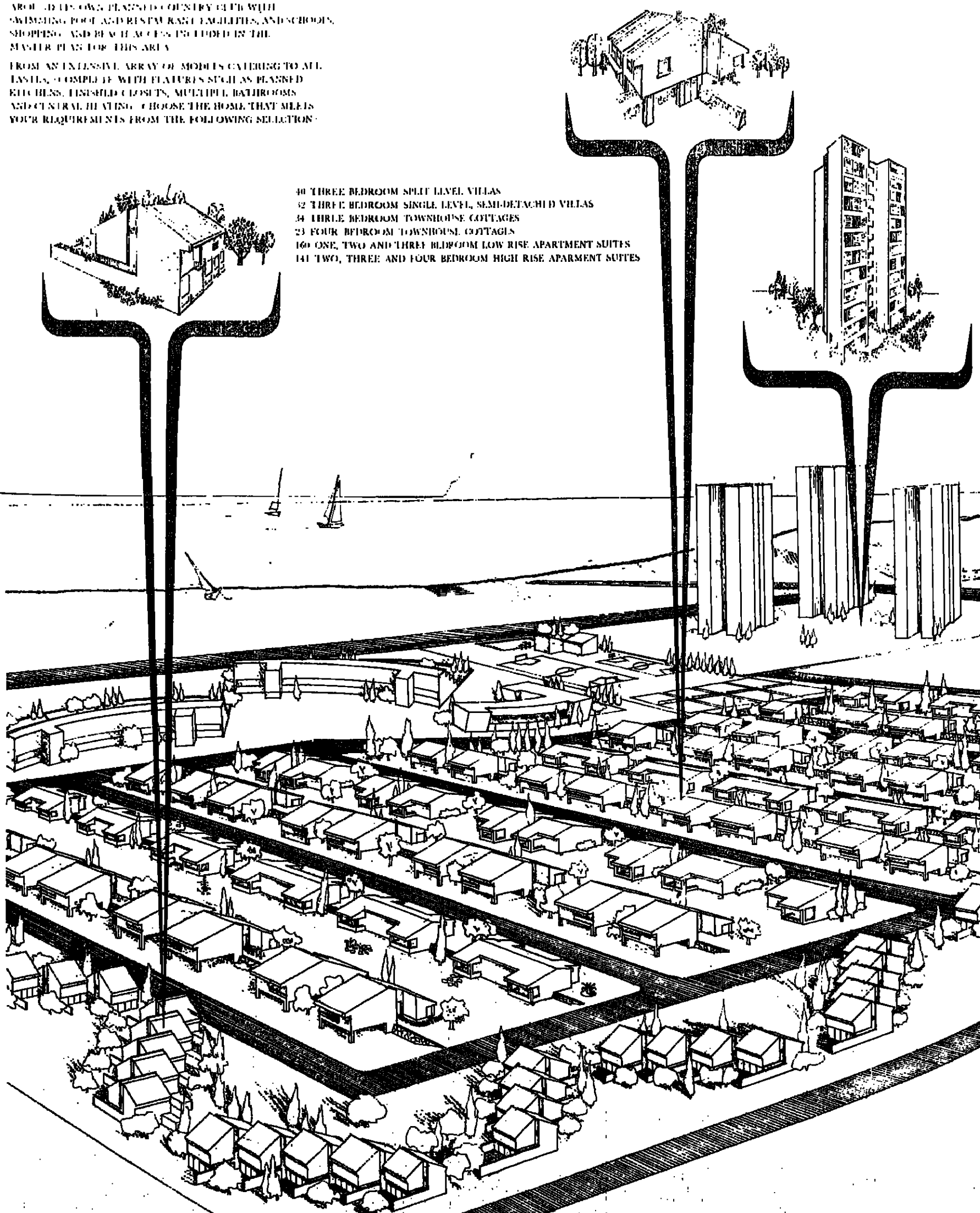
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# THE JERUSALEM POST SHAVUOT SUPPLEMENT



ON THE COVER — Photo, by David Rubinger, shows Jebel Musa (Mount Sinai), thought to be Mt. Sinai where Moses received the Torah, in foreground, and Jebel Qattania at center right.

Edited by Moshe Kohn

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## LIFE WITH THE TORA

Shavuot is referred to in the Tora as a pastoral, harvest festival. It was the Talmudic sages who, through certain calculations, fixed it as the anniversary of the Divine Revelation on Mount Sinai. In Israel, early secularists — especially in the kibbutzim — emphasized the bucolic nature of the festival, regarding its other role as "the season of the giving of the Tora." But this approach is considered naive nowadays, even by secularists — a symptom, says RAHMAN E. URBACH, Professor of Talmud at Hebrew University, of the resilience and relevance of the Tora Sheb'al Peh — the Oral Law. In an interview with DAVID LANDAU, Prof. Urbach discusses the relationship of the Oral and Written Law — and reaches conclusions relevant to Israel's present and future problems of today.

### The key to the mysteries

"While these words" (Exodus 34:27), Moses wished the Mishna to write. But the Blessed Holy One saw that the nations of the world would one day translate the Tora and read it in Greek, and then "We are Israel" ... The Blessed Holy One said to the Gentiles, "You are Israel" ... But only those who possess My mystery are My children ... That is, who possess the Mishna, which was given to me, to study and derive understanding from it."

Mishna Tanhuma, Exodus, Ki Tisa, 34

The Blessed Holy One gave Israel two Toras: the Written Tora and the Oral Tora. He gave them a written Tora containing 613 Commandments to perform and earn credit thereby ... He gave them an Oral Tora to distinguish them from the other nations. He did not give the Tora in writing, so that the Gentiles should not distort it and use it as they did with the Written Tora, then claiming that it was Israel.

Midrash Rabba, Numbers, XIV:10

fundamental rationale of Tora learning as it has developed over the millennia. On the one hand, there is the sternly theonomic approach to the Tora: the commandments must be observed not because they are sensible, or healthy or otherwise advisable, but only because they are God-given. This is the concept underlying the Jews' reply to God at Sinai (Deuteronomy 32:47). "We will observe and (then) we will hear (understand)." The same idea is at the heart of the Talmudic adage "He who performs (a good deed) because he is commanded is greater than he who performs without being commanded."

On the other hand, the Talmudic sage Rabbi Yohanan tells us in the Midrash Tanhuma that a man who performs a commandment "because he is commanded" is considered as though he himself had handed down that commandment at Sinai. In other words, by seeking out the true meaning of the Tora, a Jew can become a partner in creating the Tora.

### Partner with God

There are many other expressions in the Talmud of this idea of the Tora student as a partner, with God, in moulding the Tora — which nevertheless was revealed, perfect and complete, at Sinai. "Whatever now is a veteran scholar may formulate in his studies was revealed to Moses at Sinai," the Talmud assures us repeatedly.

Probably the most beautiful illustration of the giving-receiving dialectic is the following passage from Talmud Bavli, Menahot 25b:

"When Moses ascended on high he found the Holy One Blessed be He engaged in affixing coronets to the letters (of the Tora). Said Moses: 'Lord of the Universe, who stays thy hand?' (i.e. is there anything lacking in the Tora that these coronets are necessary?) He answered: 'There will arise a man, at the end of many generations, Akiva ben Yosef by name (Rabbi Akiva, the Mishna sage), who on each coronet will crouch down and heap up laws.' Said Moses: 'Lord of the Universe, permit me to see him.' He replied: 'Turn around.' Moses went and sat down behind eight rows (of Akiva's disciples). But he was unable to understand their arguments and this alarmed him (because he was unable to follow the discourses on the Tora given by himself). But when they came to a certain subject and the disciples said to the master: 'whence do you know this?' and he (Akiva) replied 'It is a teaching given to Moses on Sinai,' he (Moses) was comforted."

The qualified sage who expounds the Tora and derives or deduces from it new ideas, new

meanings, and, in the final analysis, new laws, is in fact revealing for his own generation sections of the Revelation at Sinai which had been, so to speak, extant but dormant hitherto. He is in effect "translating potential revelation into actual Revelation," Urbach says succinctly.

This is the basis of the Tora Sheb'al Peh, the Oral Law which according to orthodox philosophy is, like the Tora Shebiktav — the Scriptures themselves — of Divine origin. (According to one tradition (Shemot Rabbah 28.8) even the visions of the Prophets were revealed at Sinai.)

The licensee to "reveal Revelation" through expounding and expanding the Tora Shebiktav and Tora Sheb'al Peh, is very liberally given. Thus, in a legitimate dispute on a point of Halacha, we say "ואני רבני דאורייתא", both (viewpoints) are the words of the living God.

The humanist-autonomic approach is rejected. The Jew must not study the Tora with his own intellect as the starting-point, and arrive thereby at the recognition that it is indeed Divinely inspired. Instead, he must begin with an unconditional recognition and acceptance of the Divinely-revealed Tora, practise the precepts of this Tora, study it and delve into its meaning — and thereby become an active partner in its ongoing Revelation.

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ALONGSIDE this process of "revealing the Revolution" which is the essence of Tora Sheb'al Peh, there were also, throughout Jewish history, important instances of legislation or *nihilo*; the introduction of

### Receiving the Tora

WHY is Shavuot called "the Season of the Giving of our Tora" rather than "the Receiving of our Tora"? Because the Tora was offered equally to all, whereas receiving it is a matter of each person's capacity and ability. And because the Tora was given only once, thousands of years ago, whereas receiving it is a daily ongoing process.

Rabbi Mendel of Kotzk, in "Shah Safel Kodosh"

totally new precepts — sometimes even in contravention of the Tora. Hillel's *probol*, which effectively neutralized the Pentateuchal concept of the *Shemitta* sabbatical year cancelling debts, is a famous example. The Pentateuch, in Deuteronomy 15.2, states specifically that all debts are to be cancelled at the *Shemitta*. "Every creditor that lendeth ought to his



PROF. EPHRAIM URBACH

neighbour shall release it, he shall not exact it." This was a benign, utopian concept for a simple agricultural society — but served only to stifle and paralyze commerce by Hillel's time. Seeing this, Hillel decreed that the creditor could, with the debtor's knowledge, draw up a written document in which he declared that he would collect his debt regardless of the *Shemitta* — and this enabled him to circumvent the Pentateuchal cancellation.

There is an attempt in the Talmud to attribute even this apparently revolutionary decree to the Pentateuch itself, or in other words to rationalize that Hillel, too, was doing no more than reveal the Revelation. But it is far-fetched and the Talmud Bavli in Gittin, says Urbach, clearly recognizes that the *probol* is in fact a novel piece of legislation brought in to amend the law of *Shemitta* in a changing society.

The decree of the medieval Rabenu Gershom against polygamy was also a far-reaching instance of novel legislation, and there were *takkanot*, decrees, of lesser moment throughout the centuries.

In modern times, the Chief Rabbinate in Israel made some important enactments — for instance the creation of an appeals court in 1945, and the recognition of adoption as a juridical concept — but in the past 20 years there have been no *takkanot* promulgated by the Chief Rabbinate.

*Takkanot* were always the exception, rather than the rule, but innovation through case-law and through daring interpretation and exposition were the very life.

(Continued on page 26)

## The two things a man likes best



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GIVE A MAN

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one of the reasons given for reading the Book of Ruth on Shabbat is its beautiful account of a woman's heroic deed. Ruth, the heroine, tells her mother-in-law, Naomi, "I will go, and where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried." Significantly, this classic acceptance of the Torah is embodied in a woman.

There is also an interpretation of the two terms used in the Book of Ruth for the Jewish people: "Bnei Yisrael" and "Bnei Moab" respectively for the women and men who, it is implied, learn the Torah in different ways. In the last few years there has been a movement of Jewish women like Ruth, are fully willing to accept the Torah as embodied in Halacha (Jewish Law). But in accordance with the ideological shift of our times, they are asking whether it makes sense to ask of men and women accepting the Torah "in different ways." Halachic life is a value, it represents the ideal way of life as these women who are dedicated to it believe, then why should women participate in it only with men?

A growing number of these women have organized in various groups such as "Ezerat Nashim" (Women's Sector) or "Kol Ishah" (Voice of Woman) in New York, Harvard Hillel in Cambridge, or a group centering around Rachel in Los Angeles, as well as Women's Study Groups here in Jerusalem. These women would like to see changes take place within the halachic framework which will allow a woman to participate in Jewish forms of religion in the same way as a man does.

Many parallels are many parallels in spirit and conceptual framework between "Halachic Lib" and general Women's Liberation. Both, for both have been nurtured in the same intellectual and ideological soil. The energy for both comes from the radical student movement of the 1960s and the women's movement. At the heart of both movements are women, but their ideas are a sympathetic chord in other groups who find themselves dissatisfied by similar problems. For example, many mothers and grandmothers joined the students who organized the First Jewish Women's Conference in New York last year where Halachic Lib, among other things, was discussed. Halachic and secular Women's Liberation are rooted in the same modern woman and the same values which flow from it. Women in the 20th century have been able to go much farther in their education both secular and religious than ever before, but then, in what seems an almost arbitrary fashion, they have been told to stop. These roadblocks have led them to their current situation to what their grandmothers had originally led them where they were.

and self-realization. In secular terms it means that woman is no longer the social and economic adjunct of the husband and finally, her purpose being to serve them. She wants a "job" which in modern technological society is the measurement of personal worth and status. In general, she seeks sexual and economic independence, the ability to determine her own fate.

**A soul in search**  
In religious terms, the liberated woman is no longer a tool for furthering her husband's religious life and study of Torah and bringing up religious children. She is rather a soul in search of God which believes in and can find fulfillment in the Halachic forms. Her modern sensibility and concept of self will not allow her to display the self-effacement of a Rachel, the wife of Halbi Akiva, who sold her hair and went poor so that her husband

could study Torah. The woman seeking Halachic Lib, in contrast to the older model of the Jewish woman, does not see herself as part of a hierarchy where satisfaction is gained from participating in and serving family and community but rather is a self searching for its place in this world and the next. The hard, well defined, legal formulations of Halacha and the institutionalized forms of worship to which men have access are seen by these women as the means of gaining those worlds; are seen as the place where the real value in traditional Jewish life lies, rather than in the more emotional, more amorphous (and perhaps freer) spiritual life traditionally assigned to women.

Consequently, the women involved in seeking changes within Halacha want not only the privileges but, concomitantly, also all the responsibilities that men have under Jewish law. Unlike the late woman who resents the divisions and inequalities of the Orthodox synagogue but who would never think of being equal in the sense of putting on Tallit and Tefillin, these women want to fulfill all the Mitzvot (Commandments of the Torah).

**Exemptions**  
According to Jewish law, women are exempt from those positively phrased Mitzvot "which are tied down by time limitations." This includes Mitzvot like wearing a Tallit Kattan (ritual-fringed garment), saying the portions of the Shema, sitting in a Sukka, which all must be done at specified times. A woman is allowed to perform these Mitzvot if she so desires, but, being exempt, has customarily not done so. The women of Halachic Lib would like to see these positive commandments becoming obligatory upon women as well as men.

The question whether their busy role in the home would not make this difficult and prohibitive in terms of time is waved away as not really relevant today, when technology has given women more leisure time. In addition these women assume that men should share in the household and family chores equally, thus allowing women to participate in all aspects of Jewish life. The women in Halachic Lib point out that there are some Mitzvot which occur within time limitations which women have become accustomed to perform — e.g. hear-

ing the blowing of the Shofar on Rosh Hashana or blessing the Lulav on Sukkot. It is argued that if positive commandments "tied to time" upon themselves, something which in no way contradicts Jewish Law (the Talmud brings examples of women who put on Tefillin, another type of commandment from which women are exempt), then perhaps eventually these, too, would become customary for women to fulfill, like hearing the Shofar.

There are other issues which pose more difficult problems from a Halachic point of view and which the women of Halachic Lib cannot legislate for themselves as they can in putting on Tallit and Tefillin. These concern areas of involvement in public religious life such as public prayer. Here they can only bring the

questions to the attention of the authorities, ask them to grapple with the problems and clamor that Halachic scholarship be brought to bear upon them. Traditionally, private prayer is incumbent upon women as well as men. According to the Talmud women are not exempt "from prayer, Mezuzah and blessing after the meal" (Brachot 20a). In the case of prayer, the Talmudic Sages say that a woman is not exempt because she, too, needs God's mercy. There is a difference of opinion as to whether, by prayer, the Talmud is referring to the institutionalized prayer, the Eighteen Benedictions, or whether non-structured, spontaneous, personal prayer is meant.

**Public prayer**  
In any case, women were never expected to participate in the public forms of prayer. Public prayer is almost a separate institution and, being intended to replace the public Temple service, was to be held in an "edah" or community, representative of the total Jewish community. (The Biblical term "edah" is interpreted to apply to a minimum of 10 adult males, called a Minyan.) Neither the Talmud nor any of the early Rabbinic authorities until Rabbi Joseph Caro in the 16th century explicitly excluded women from Minyan. It just seemed to be understood that a woman, although part of the community, could not represent the community.

The question that the women in the Halachic Lib movement raise here, as in other places, is whether it is a norm that women should not represent the community, or whether this is a descriptive situation, the expression of a time when women, in fact, did not represent the community and therefore could not form a Minyan. If this is simply a result of a sociological situation, then today, when women participate more fully in the community and can represent the community in other ways, they could conceivably form a Minyan too.

These are all considerations that, on the whole, Orthodox Rabbis devote to a Halachic direction have not grappled with. And the women, in order to satisfy what they feel to be a pressing need for religious expression, have begun to sidestep the Rabbis in what they see to

be minor or questionable infringements and have begun to form their own women's Minyanim. The Minyanim that have begun to operate regularly in Harvard Hillel or on special occasions for some of the other groups (the Jerusalem Women's Study Group is trying to organize a Minyan for Shabbat) have women participating in all aspects of communal prayer. Perhaps the least problematic of these is the ally to the Torah, since the injunction against women blessing the Torah even in a mixed Minyan is based on the concept of "kevod hatzibur" (respect for the community), and today it would not necessarily offend most communities to give women aliyot.

There are certainly many problems not directly involved with religious observance but with women's rights under Jewish law.

**WOMEN'S LIB AND HALACHA**  
*Orthodox women demand rights*  
By Rochelle Furstenberg

There are certainly many problems not directly involved with religious observance but with women's rights under Jewish law.

**Talmud and women**  
The Talmud in its many-faceted richness brings varying and contrasting approaches to the subject of women. One must differentiate between what the Rabbis say about women's service to God, their position vis a vis Jewish law, and what they are posting as the nature of women. Admittedly, their view of women's nature influences their view about her position under Jewish law, but there is much ambivalence about women's nature in the Talmud. In one reference, she is more easily seduced than man; in another, she is less easily seduced. She is quoted, on one hand, as having more wisdom than man; on the other, as having wisdom only in her hands or craft. The women in the Halachic Lib movement are asking modern Halachists to interpret and legislate from this maze of material for the women of our day.

The role of the Jewish woman in Jewish life — in Halacha — is not a new topic. It has been discussed a great deal through the ages. The new aspect with which Women's Halachic Lib is confronting the Rabbis is in their demand for changes.

There are some Rabbis like Rabbi Yitzhak (Irving) Greenberg, an Orthodox Rabbi in New York, who have taken a radical stance on this issue. At the National Conference of Jewish Women he called for more change on the issue of women, contending that "what is lacking is imagination and religious leadership, not God's authorization." But tradition by definition does not accept the modern assumption that all change is for the good. It is wary of giving in to passing

movements; its life-style tends to see change as giving into the "world's ways" and therefore to hold off from it. But if a change does not contradict or conflict with the *tradition sources*, and, moreover, it is dangerous not to change, then perhaps the women seeking a turning point in their relationship to Jewish law have a chance.

This was the case, for example, in the matter of religious education for women. There is a forbidding saying in the Talmud that he who teaches his daughter Torah is teaching her cheapness. This can be interpreted a minimal way, relating to one specific case under discussion, and can be countered by other sayings which allow one to teach one's daughter. For many hundreds of years, although there were some learned women who were the exceptions and although women learned from the life around them which was infused with tradition, many women were abysmally ignorant of the principles and sources of their religion to the point that they weren't even taught to read.

This situation was seen as dangerous, and religious education for women was begun. A recent authority, the late Rabbi Zalman Sorotkin (of Israel), in his Responsa, discusses the stigma against teaching women and points out the views in favor of teaching them. He tells of the legend that Abraham taught the women monotheism before the men. Moreover, he points out that the influences of the day being what they are, it undermines the family and community if women are lacking religious training. Perhaps Rabbis in our day will also come to realize that it is dangerous to ignore the women who are calling for changes from within the traditional framework; that to see their demands as a passing fancy is to ignore their deep rootedness in our modern concept of self and in our aspiration to self-realization.

**'Normative' ideal**  
In addition to the problems regarding change in Halacha, a number of interesting theoretical issues are raised by the Women's Halachic Lib movement concerning the nature of Judaism in general. Historically it is difficult to maintain that Judaism displays the democratic impulse so important to liberation movements. This is particularly true with regard to the service of God.

The special functions of the Kohanim (the Priests) in Temple times indicate that not all Jews were expected to serve God in the same manner. Among modern Jewish thinkers, the late Chief Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook made the point that the lack of equality among Jews is mitigated by, and perhaps contributes to, their sense of unity as a community — and for him, this sense of community was an overriding ideal. This does not mean that Talmudic scholarship might not be able to equalize woman's participation in the service of God. It only raises the question of what the spirit of Judaism is in such matters.

Another issue implicit in the very term "Halachic Lib" is the exclusive supremacy of the Halachic or "normative" ideal in the Jewish religion. This exclusiveness has often been challenged by mystical movements that have tried to emphasize the spiritual and the unformulated dimensions which are in the background of the religious norms. It may be that in our generation, a one-sided view of religion's values has developed and in this scale of values women are discriminated against. Perhaps these values of Jewish life that transcend the particulars of normative religious observance must be re-emphasized. The question might be not whether the soul finds self-realization in the Jewish religion but how it finds it.

Rochelle Furstenberg, Orthodox, is a wife, mother and freelance writer who lives in Jerusalem.



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# Rabbinical Courts' conservatism

by Alexander Carlebach

Many years ago, when English readers were amused by A.P. Hays' humorous novel "Tolly Shock," which exposed the attitudes and hypocrisy of English divorce laws (and, incidentally, commented on their subsequent amendment), the Rabbinical courts could be said to be in the same with which divorce is obtainable under Jewish law, particularly as far as the male sex is concerned.

## No choice for wife:

In centuries, the wife had no choice but to accept the *Get*, until the enactment by or in the name of Rabbi Gershom (11th century), made her free acceptance necessary. So long, therefore, as a wife is agreed upon divorce, the courts may attempt to settle the parties, but they have no choice except to arrange a divorce between them.

This position is very different, however, when a case is contested. The wife refuses to give or accept the *Get*. It is here that the wife is at a disadvantage. The woman is given a dispensation to refuse again if she obtains the consent of 100 rabbis residing in different countries, and, if she obtains the consent of the two rabbis, the reason is that polygamy (but not polygamy was legal, until prohibited by the enactment of Rabbi Gershom, which can however be circumvented by the above procedure. The husband's refusal to give a *Get* to the other hand, may turn the wife into an *aguna*, a woman bound to a detested husband, who may marry again. Under Israeli law, the husband can be fined and imprisoned for refusing to give a *Get*, the refusal being considered contempt of court. But the courts are very sparing in imposing a husband to give a *Get*. Nor is the remedy infallible. A certain man was in prison for several years until he decided to free himself by divorcing his wife.

The human point of view) and more difficult (from the Jewish one), as divorce is in the first place a matter for the civil courts. In most modern non-Catholic countries today civil divorce is relatively easy to obtain by both husband and wife, but no legal obligation exists for a Jewish husband to grant a *Get* as well. In some countries courts have occasionally used their power to oblige the husband to do so but the legitimacy of such orders, where state interference in religious matters is unconstitutional, has been doubted.

Many civil divorces of Jews, which are not recognized by Halacha, are not followed by *Get* proceedings at all, due as much to ignorance or lack of interest on the part of non-Orthodox couples as to the unwillingness of husbands to oblige. In the case of re-marriage, civilly or by a Reform rabbi, the offspring of this halachically illegal and indeed criminal union will be considered *mamzerim*. The recent case of "the brother and sister" revealed the unhappiness that can result.

Prof. Falk is concerned chiefly with the position in Israel. What are the wife's chances of obtaining a *Get* from an unwilling husband? And what are the prospects that a court order to this effect will in fact be carried out?

The answer is depressing. Prof. Falk was given access to the 93 relevant files of a certain year in

the Jerusalem Rabbinical Court and examined 88 cases in which the wife was asking for a divorce. Of these suits, 39 per cent were still unsuccessful 10 years after they were filed — a scandalously high percentage. One may assume that the position is no better in other Israeli Rabbinical courts.

The thorough study of the social and communal background of these cases made by the author and his statistical assistant is of absorbing interest to the social historian, but is of minor relevance to the main point at issue — the fair and efficient administration of justice in this particular field.

THE study shows that with the best will in the world the work of the Rabbinical courts in this area cannot be called either fair or efficient. The courts are reluctant to use the many Halachic remedies, which could give relief to captive wives. The continuous flow of opinion in the Responsa literature, not to mention the "liberal" views and practice which prevailed in Gaonic and post-Gaonic times (Rishonim), offers sufficient precedent to deal with the individual case. The Mishna (Eduyot 1:3) stated the principle that minority opinions were impor-

tant as precedents for future jurisdiction. Today's practice, trenchantly described by Prof. Falk, is not only to disregard minority opinion but majority opinion as well as long as even one single authority adopts a negative stance. The reluctant party is required to give or receive the *Get* only when such grounds are formulated by Jewish law: in the Mishna or Talmud, Codes or Responsa.

The author regards it as one of the defects of present practice that the Rabbinical courts are extremely reluctant to go beyond this limited number of traditional grounds. The irreparable breakdown of the marriage is not one of these, except in special cases, or where several grounds are concurrently available. The jurisdiction of the Rabbinical Appeals Court has not much changed this situation. Even where the courts find that the husband ought to give a divorce, they are only rarely prepared to issue an order for enforcement — and even this is not always effective. A law on judgment which cannot be enforced is neither law nor judgment.

Prof. Falk devotes an entire chapter to an analysis of the mentality and attitudes of the *Dayyanim* (Rabbinical court judges). Nobody would want to doubt the integrity and humanity of this body of scholars who are, by and large, the cream of the yeshiva world. But it is the particular mental make-up of this world which is largely responsible for the shortcomings, at least in this area of jurisdiction.

Certain yeshivot seem to enjoy a kind of monopoly of these appointments — they even run in certain families — to the exclusion of institutions of Hungarian, or Hassidic character (in the latter, emotional counter-balances the rationalistic disposition account is that the *Dayyanim* seem to be devoid of self-criticism and impervious to any criticism from without. This emerges from Falk's quotations of the rare verbal or written reactions to his and other questionings.

Simple reforms  
As the author points out, what is needed is not only a more flexible jurisdiction, but some simple reforms in the law which would make it easier for the courts to meet the demands of changed times and of natural justice. Here the criticism is directed not so much against the Rabbinical courts as against the Chief Rabbinate which for nearly 26 years has not issued a single *Takkanah* (enactment embodying a legal reform). Prior to 1950, when the late Dr. Herzog was Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi, a number of such *Takkanot*, often far-reaching and revolutionary, were issued to bring Halacha in line with modern times. These were and are applied by the Rabbinical courts without demur.

fortress of Halacha, and above all its concepts of marriage and divorce, must be defended at all costs, including the misery of scores or even hundreds of captive wives.

The author also criticizes the type of *Dayyanim* appointed, more than three-quarters of whom are Ashkenazim with the rest drawn from Oriental communities, whose Halachic approach is less bound by a restrictive tradition. Indeed, one of Prof. Falk's suggestions is that wives should bring their divorce claims to courts composed of Yeshiva *Dayyanim*, those faithful followers of Maimonides who ruled that a wife who declares that she finds her husband repulsive and cannot cohabit with him willingly, is entitled to a divorce "as she should not be treated as a captive of the sword" (Ishut 14:8). According to Falk most *Dayyanim* are devoid of any general, let alone higher education; they certainly have no knowledge of modern legal theory and practice; and they possess little experience of life in the wider community, particularly since the separation of the communal rabbinate from the *Dayyanim*.

Though there will be those who will see in Prof. Falk's study and indeed in this review — an unwarranted attack on a sacred institution, nothing could be further from the truth. The learned author writes patently out of "love of Torah and the fear of Heaven." Perhaps the most disturbing element in his

Freedom and law  
PASSOVER is also called the Festival of Spring and Shavuot is also called the First-fruits Festival. This is logical. For first comes the springtime flowering and then come the fruits. By the same token, Passover is the Jewish people's flowering festival and Shavuot is our festival of first fruits. For a liberated people without Torah — without a law, a teaching, a way — is like flowers without fruit. Flowers are good to look at but they offer no nourishment. In the Exodus was only a means whose end was the giving of the Torah.

Rabbi Moshe Avigdor Amiel  
dispassionate account is that the *Dayyanim* seem to be devoid of self-criticism and impervious to any criticism from without. This emerges from Falk's quotations of the rare verbal or written reactions to his and other questionings.

Simple reforms  
As the author points out, what is needed is not only a more flexible jurisdiction, but some simple reforms in the law which would make it easier for the courts to meet the demands of changed times and of natural justice. Here the criticism is directed not so much against the Rabbinical courts as against the Chief Rabbinate which for nearly 26 years has not issued a single *Takkanah* (enactment embodying a legal reform). Prior to 1950, when the late Dr. Herzog was Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi, a number of such *Takkanot*, often far-reaching and revolutionary, were issued to bring Halacha in line with modern times. These were and are applied by the Rabbinical courts without demur.

The most urgently needed *Takkanah* is one instituting an agreement between bride and bridegroom at the time of their marriage by which the husband irrevocably empowers the Rabbinical courts to administer

a *Get* on his behalf in well-defined circumstances. Such an agreement would not only be sufficient to make a recalcitrant husband grant a *Get* of his own accord, but it would help to avoid the misery of an *aguna* in case of the husband's incapacity or insanity, and might obviate the need for *halitza*.

This is a far cry from "conditional marriage" which by agreement or, indeed, by the powers of the court, could be declared invalid *ab initio*. The socio-moral objections against such a procedure, long mooted and discussed in Rabbinical literature, are obvious. Professor Falk's study gives a full and reasoned account of the history of these and similar suggestions made by rabbis and scholars of undoubted standing. What is most depressing is the conspiracy of silence, only occasionally interrupted by the unreasoning opposition with which the works and proposals of men like the late Dr. Aaron Freimann (a victim of the Mount Scopus convey murders in April 1948) or Prof. Eliezer Berkovits have been received. Rabbinical scholars of the old school, who argued for reform, were either ignored or made to retract. One can only hope that Prof. Falk will not meet with a similar fate.

Study recommended  
An alternative might be for them to attend a one-year course in modern jurisprudence, comparative law and legal administration and, perhaps, sociology at Bar-Ilan University or elsewhere. This might remedy some of the shortcomings pointed out by Prof. Falk concerning the lack of orderliness and efficiency, of written and reasoned judgments, etc., in the Rabbinical courts. *Dayyanim* should not only have passed their statutory and admittedly stiff examinations in Talmud and Halacha (although there have been some regrettable breaches of procedure in this connection), but should also have some experience as registrars or accredited solicitors-barristers. In general, those who wish to maintain the present Rabbinic monopoly in matters of marriage and divorce, must show that they are able and willing to apply Halacha in such a way that justice can be seen to be done. Our new Chief Rabbis are both known for their courage and mastery of Halacha. It is too much to hope that they first agree between themselves, and then carry their Council with them, to issue the necessary *Takkanah* or, alternatively, bring the matters discussed here before the body of our *Dayyanim* for dispassionate discussion and majority decision? The prospects are none too bright if one considers the events of the last six months and the violent opposition to Chief Rabbi Goren and his actions on the part of many *Dayyanim*. But a counsel of despair would be equally barren.

Dr. Carlebach, who lives in Jerusalem, is Rabbi of Belfast and an Encyclopaedia Judaica Editor.



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## Beyond the 'seven species'

Louis I. Rabinowitz

the Revelation at Mount Sinai took place on Shavuot is attested by the Talmudic Sages in a number of places. In the Mishnah (Eruvin 18a) it is stated that the giving of the Torah was on the 6th of Sivan, which is the day after Shavuot.

It is worth while considering the apparent paradox in this last statement. What is the position today with regard to those fruits mentioned in the Bible? In Biblical times Eretz Yisrael was not only self-supporting in wheat (and probably barley), in olive and in date honey, but it even had an exportable surplus. According to the vivid description of Tyre, the international trade emporium of ancient times, in Ezekiel 28:17, Judaea exported all three.

Today wheat, barley and even olives are imported. Modern agricultural needs have turned the great advantage of the fig in ancient times — that its harvest is spread over some five months — into a disadvantage which has resulted in its going practically out of cultivation; a crop which cannot be gathered quickly is not a commercial proposition. The pomegranate hardly ranks as a commercial product. Only the grape — especially in the expanding market in wine — still holds its own, while the date palm in recent years in the Jewish sector in Israel and its gradual expansion is one of the romantic stories of agriculture in Israel.

Remarkable progress On the other hand, the remarkable progress which has been made in scientific agriculture has more than compensated for this falling off in the traditional fruits of Israel. The agricultural wealth of the country and a major part of its foreign currency derive from fruits which were either completely unknown in ancient times or were largely exotic. It is astonishing, for instance, to realize, as I pointed out in a recent article, that the only citrus fruit mentioned in the Bible is the etrog, and even that mention depends upon the identification of the "fruit of the

goodly tree" of Leviticus 23:40 with the etrog. Oranges and lemons, grapefruit and pomelos and cumin were quite unknown. The avafah, the watermelon, mentioned only once in the Bible as growing in Egypt (Numbers 11:5), finds a ready and unsaturated market throughout Europe. We are self-sufficient in apples which, apart from their fourfold mention in the Song of Songs, are mentioned only once in the Bible, in Job, and in pears and peaches which are mentioned in the Talmud though not in the Bible.

To those, however, must be added a remarkable range of fruits which are being produced in ever-greater quantities, and in ever-improved quality, and which no one dreamt would ever be added to the fruit exports of Israel. There is reason to believe that the banana was known in Eretz Yisrael shortly after the close of the Talmudic period, but the present variety, the Cavendish, was introduced from Egypt only in the 19th century. It is, however, an acclimatized variety when compared to the astonishing variety of new fruits which have been introduced and are grown in commercial quantities in our own days.

There is the amazing expansion of the growing of the avocado pear for which the demand steadily increases and of which 7,000 tons were exported last year. Avocado plantations already cover 20,000 dunams and 10,000 dunams more have been planted but the trees have not yet reached maturity. The persimmon, the loquat, the quince, the guava all add to the total. Hardly a year passes without a new fruit, regarded as exotic and rare, being marketed. The two traditional nuts of the Bible, the almond and the walnut, are being put in the shade — of the pecan tree. Ten years ago a man with a good knowledge of botany asked me whether it was true that in South Africa the passion fruit, of which hitherto only the flowering variety was known in this coun-

try as a flowering hedge, actually produced an edible fruit. Today that fruit, the grenadilla, can be bought in the markets and is exported. I told him of fruits there like the mango and the custard apple, never believing that they could be grown here; the quantities marketed increase steadily from year to year.

There is another important aspect of this phenomenal confirmation that "Israel can produce every species of fruit." The law with regard to the bringing of the First-fruits lays down, as stated above, that one may bring the First-fruits only from Shavuot to Sukkot and during that period one had to make the Declaration of Thanksgiving given in Deuteronomy, 26:3-10. From Sukkot to Hanukkah one could still bring them but the Declaration was not to be made. That law reflected an agricultural reality. With the harvest festival of Sukkot, the blessed yield of the trees came virtually to an end for that year. A few trees might yet produce a word which "kayitz," a word which means both "summer fruit" and "the last of the fruits," but it could by no means be regarded as a First-fruits worthy of presentation, God hath given thee."

Have we not reason to declare, with hearts overflowing with gratitude: "And He hath brought us unto this place and given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey... And thou shalt rejoice in all the good which the Lord thy God hath given thee."

How different is the picture today. Year after year I marvel at the fact that simultaneously with the picking of the last summer fruits the first citrus crop is on the market, and as the citrus harvest comes to its end the first of the summer fruits appear. It is not refrigeration and deep-freezing alone that ensure that we have fruit the whole year round; we have attained a year-round supply of fresh fruit. It is the literal fulfilment of the prophecy of Amos, "Behold the days will come, saith the Lord, that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed."

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Strawberries being grown under plastic in Israel — one of the many fruits, unknown to our ancestors in this land, which modern agricultural methods have added to the Israeli fruit basket.

(Photo: Werner Braun)

but as "Last-fruits." From Hanukkah until Pessah, when the offering of the first harvest — that of barley — was brought, nature went to sleep, its long sleep of winter. Trees were barren, producing nothing.

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By Hersh Goodman

THE Defence Forces Chaplaincy does not tend to receive much publicity. In fact, until recently, most non-observant soldiers along their national service were hardly aware of its existence at all. The only contact one had with the Chaplaincy was on attending either a wedding or a funeral of a comrade-in-arms, or perhaps on Passover night if one had to remain on duty.

But a revolution has come about in the unit since. Tal-Aluf Mordechai Piron took over the post of Chief Chaplain from Aluf Shlomo Goren, now Israel's Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi. For one thing, the Chaplaincy has become a proper chaplaincy, according to T-A Piron. Instead of dispensing religious services to various field units, the Chaplaincy now dispenses, in addition, counsel and advice, comfort and understanding to all soldiers, regardless of their religious convictions.

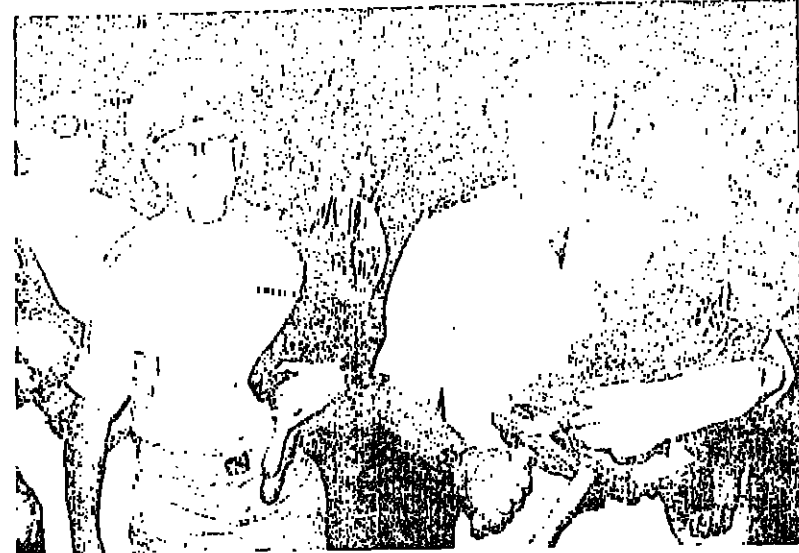
T-A Piron has been in uniform for 25 years. He has earned a reputation of being a pragmatist and, to a lesser extent, a reputation of being something of a prophet when, on Passover 1967, about six weeks before the Six Day War, in a sermon to pilots at an Air Force base, he said that though the Haggada tells of Israel's flight from Egypt, "in some way have a feeling that soon we will be speaking about our return."

### The 'new chaplaincy'

T-A Piron speaks of the role of the "new chaplaincy" with fervor. "It is our duty," he says, "to bring the message of the Torah to soldiers at all levels. To bring to them 4,000 years of history and culture and tradition. To provide them with the thread of continuity and the historical perspective which explains and justifies the role they have been charged with."

In order to disseminate the message, T-A Piron has brought about changes in the structure of the Chaplaincy. Whereas before several rabbis warmed comfortable seats in the Kirya in Tel Aviv and the work in the field was left to 20-year-old "Religion Sergeants" or "Religion Officers" whose only qualifications were a high-school diploma and a religious upbringing, today there is not a brigade in the armed forces without its own chaplain. The Brigade Chaplain travels with the units into manoeuvres and into battle. He visits camps and bases regularly and has a tight lecture schedule. His office is open at all hours to all comers, whether they are seeking religious counsel or the Chaplain's advice on their personal problems.

## Rabbis for the army



The Chief Chaplain to the Forces, Tal-Aluf Mordechai Piron, preceded by the Chief of Staff, Rav-Aluf David Elazar, and followed by the O.C. Central Command, Aluf Ruhavam Ze'evi, dancing at Simhat Tora Hakafot "somewhere in Israel" last autumn. (Israel Press)

Today there are dozens of chaplains out in the field. They have accompanied the forces on the recent raids into the Lebanon, and they spend several days of each week living under quasi-battle conditions during manoeuvres. They have earned themselves and the army chaplaincy a new respect — a respect of the religion they stand for — thus, perhaps, showing the way for better and closer understanding between the religious and the non-religious once the men are out of uniform.

The average age of these "field rabbis" is 25-26. They are all ordained rabbis, and most of them hold the rank of captain, giving them rapport with the base commanders. Many of them are married and fathers — all factors adding up to a very different image than that enjoyed by the 10-year-old second-lieutenants who were charged with religious affairs up to now.

The day I interviewed T-A Piron in his book-lined office in the Kirya he was subdued. He had just returned from a memorial service for a soldier who had fallen a year earlier. He attends dozens of similar functions throughout the year, every day there is not a brigade in the armed forces without its own chaplain. The Brigade Chaplain travels with the units into manoeuvres and into battle. He visits camps and bases regularly and has a tight lecture schedule. His office is open at all hours to all comers, whether they are seeking religious counsel or the Chaplain's advice on their personal problems.

One of the major undertakings of the chaplaincy has been in solving the problems posed by soldiers who have died in action, but have never been definitely identified. Since 1948 there have been 410 such cases. Many of the men were married. The question arose what was to be done with regard to the widows. Since a man who disappears without there being definite evidence that he has died is presumed to be alive, should permission be granted for the wives of such men to remarry — on the basis of the strong circumstantial evidence that they did — or should the woman be required to wait until unequivocal proof of the man's death has been provided — a process that could take years. Thanks to painstaking research and effort by the Chaplaincy there is not a single known case in Israel where widows of servicemen have been prevented from re-marrying. Hundreds of hours of checking and searching, interrogating and questioning have prevented — in the words of T-A Piron — "a second tragedy from occurring in the same household."

### 'Humane' approach

Though the Defence Forces Chaplaincy is entirely independent of the civilian Chief Rabbinate, it formulates its rule and regulations well within the bounds of acceptable Halachic practice. "What we do try and do, however," T-A Piron said, "is to make the approach to religious problems more humane. An example is the special conver-

sion course being held under Defence Forces auspices.

"Today we are facing the problems created by the Holocaust," he said. Dozens of youngsters rescued from the debris of Europe after the end of World War II, children of parents married without formal Jewish benediction due to the pressures of the times, and hundreds of other instances where a youngster's Jewishness from a Halachic viewpoint is in doubt, have necessitated an answer for new recruits who are Israelis and about to don uniforms. No doubt the large wave of immigration from Soviet Russia has also posed its problems. T-A Piron said: "Our conversion process differs from that of the Chief Rabbinate only in that we have cut down the bureaucratic procedures to a minimum, making it as easy as possible for these young men and women to convert according to the specifications of our religion." He had not the slightest doubt that the conversions would be fully accepted by the Rabbinate, as would all the other rulings made by the Chaplaincy.

Such rulings were the hallmark of Aluf Goren, who used the leniency provided by Halacha in such a manner as to enable religious soldiers to serve in the Defence Forces without compromising their religious beliefs or their loyalty to the State. T-A Piron and his associates have continued the tradition, having to find countless answers to the countless problems which keep coming to the surface. How does one deal with electronic equipment on the

Sabbath? Under what conditions one ride on the Sabbath? By rules and regulations for soldiers, sailors, frogmen, pilots, men serving with the armoured and artillery units. Each man has his own specific problems — issues which need answers both a sound interpretation of Halacha and answers which will satisfy both individual and the State.

### Orthodox can serve

T-A Piron notes proudly that the Defence Forces — no matter in which — which is not open to Orthodox soldiers, and where the cannot serve with complete freedom of conscience. This fact alone is a monument enough to the Defence Forces Chaplaincy.

Another difficult problem, which persists to this day, is the ing of a "common religion" for thousands of Orthodox boys and girls who go into service each year, hailing from different religious traditions and practices. A common prayerbook — "Nussach Ahid" — has been published with a lay explanatory foreword by T-A Piron, incorporating elements of the Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Yemenite traditions. This prayerbook, like the "Nussach Ahid" Passover Haggada issued by Aluf Goren, does not satisfy all, T-A Piron admits.

"It is not easy to tell a 17-year-old, who since his earliest memories has been praying in a certain manner, to revise his habits for the three years he is in uniform. But this is one of the sacrifices that has to be made. In the armed forces, we live together, fight together, together and suffer together. They attain victory together, rejoice together. It is only natural that they should also pray together."

The Israel Defence Forces are the perfect example of religious coexistence, T-A Piron feels. In where else in the country do religious and the non-observant live in greater harmony. Nowhere else the country do religious men of different backgrounds unite in a strong bond as in the forces. he feels, will ultimately make a mark on the nation as a whole, and the vast majority of youth go through the forces and come out that much more understanding.

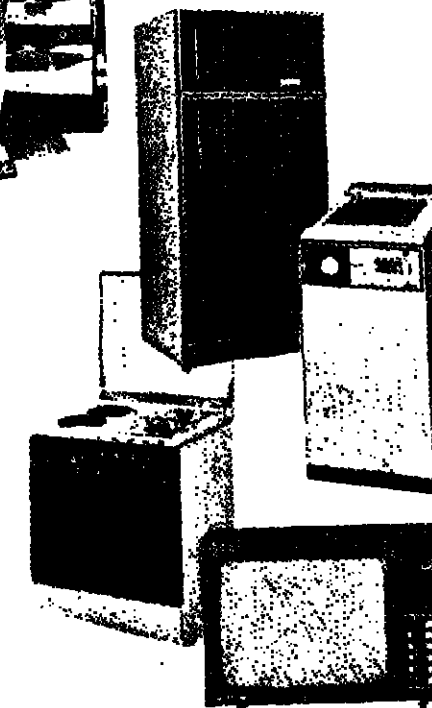
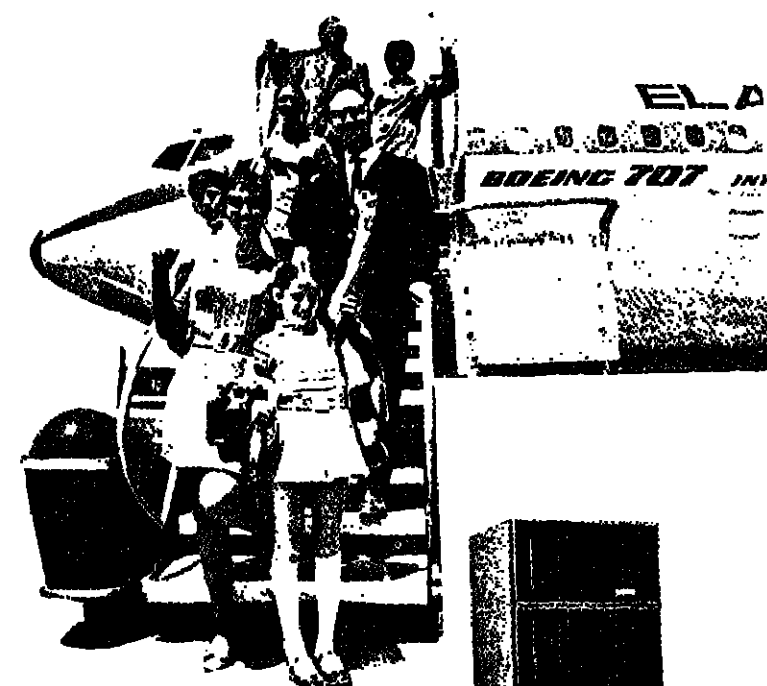
T-A Piron is the first to admit that there are still problems to be solved. "But despite the problems, indeed, because of them — I believe that the youngsters of today come out of the Defence Forces better Jews and better Israelis than when they went in," he concluded.

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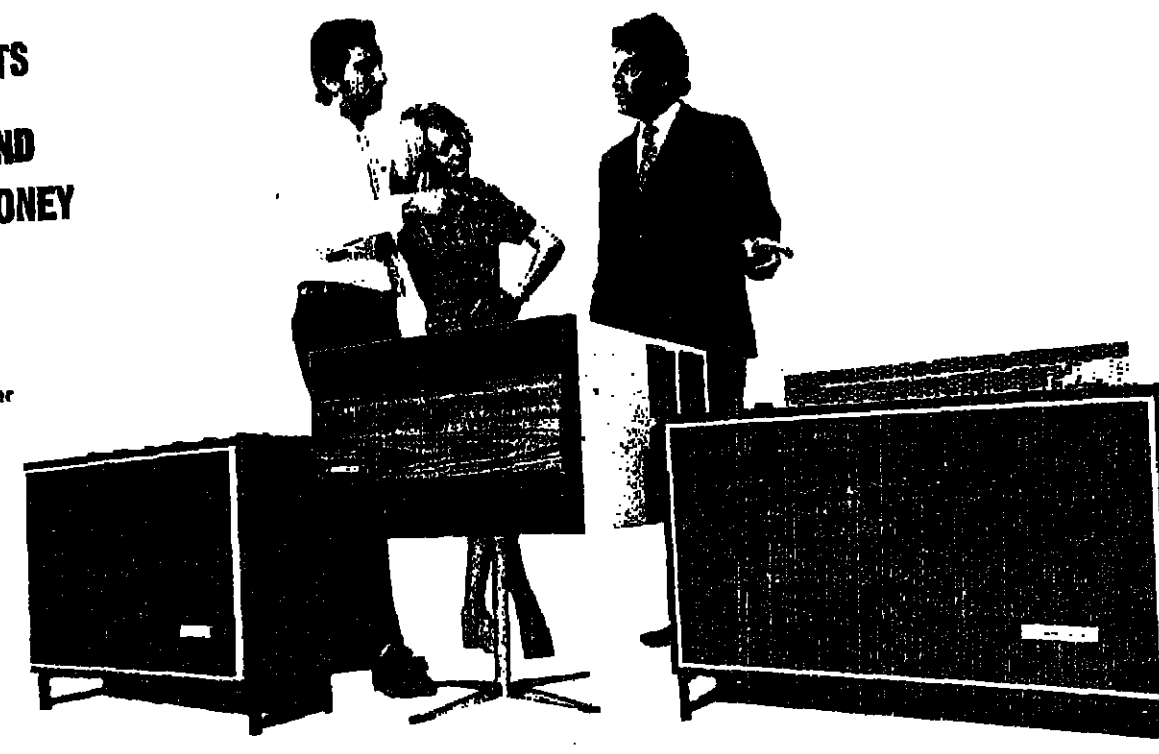


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## Scholars and soldiers

Special to The Jerusalem Post THE subject is Tora, the students are modern, the setting quaint, and the enthusiasm high. The result — a crystallization of aims and values in which, in the words of the late Chief Rabbi Kook, the old is renewed and the new sanctified.

The founders of Yeshivat Hakotel could not envisage the full ex-

tent of the interest of the younger set in acquiring Tora scholarship. The school was founded in 1967, right after the Six Day War, with eight students — the first to return to the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. Today there are 163 young men enrolled and a long waiting list. There is also a graduate school for advanced scholars

with an enrolment of 20. About 10 per cent of the student body come from abroad.

The Yeshivat Hakotel student is not the usual type of yeshiva bocher: neither is the Yeshivat Hakotel the usual type of yeshiva. It is perhaps the differences which have added to the significant results.

Student attire is knitted kippa and casual dress. There is no rule on uniformity. The candidate for entrance to Yeshivat Hakotel is a graduate of a yeshiva high school. His desire is to continue studying Tora and at the same time to bear full and equal responsibility of citizenship in the State of Israel. The basic concept that Tora is a way of life and applicable at all times is the central feature of the school's philosophy.

It is this outlook which accompanies the student throughout his stay at the Yeshivat Hakotel and during his military service. For at Yeshivat Hakotel all Israeli students fulfil their military obligation while enrolled at the school. A special arrangement with the Defence Ministry known as *hader* has made it possible for these yeshiva students to undergo training in com-



Yeshivat Hakotel students, doing their Army service in the framework of the "heder," at morning prayers following all-night manoeuvres.

patible groups. The students who go into military service under the *heder* do so with an esprit de corps which begins at the school and is transferred with the group to various military bases. The home base is, of course, Jerusalem's Old City. The Yeshivat Hakotel is in the former Batul Mahse compound, which has been renovated to serve the school needs. The dormitories are in rehabilitated buildings inside the Jewish Quarter.

These quarters are temporary. Yeshivat Hakotel has embarked on a building programme, on a site overlooking the Western Wall and the Temple Mount. The architect,



Former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Isser Yehuda Unterman delivers Talmud lecture at Yeshivat Hakotel.



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STUDIO PAK

TUESDAY, JUNE 5, 1973

## KIDS AND KASHRUT Talmud project wins Israel Prize

By Curtis Arnsen

POPULAR Shavuot custom is eating of milk foods before the noon meal of meat. No precise origin of this custom has been traced, but there have been many explanations. Many of the explanations begin with Song of Songs: "Your lips, my bride, are like honey and milk are your tongue." As Shavuot is the festival of the giving of the Torah, according to the allegorical interpretation of Song of Songs, the milk and honey connected with the Torah, then one must eat milk and honey connected with the Torah.

Shimon of Ostropol, using the word (adding up the numbers of the Hebrew letters), adds up to 40, the number of days Moses spent on Mount Sinai. In the notation of the initial letters from the phrase: וְכִסְתָּם בְּחֵטְאֵי שִׁבְעָה בְּיָמֵי הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה (On the day of the First-fruits you bring a new Meal-offering Numbers 28:26) form the word חֵטְאֵי — from milk.

"Sefer Ma'amim" states that when the Israelites were in the desert, they were too hungry to wait for the giving of the Torah, so they ate the milk of a woman.

One of the more popular explanations is that when the Israelites were in the desert, they were too hungry to wait for the giving of the Torah, so they ate the milk of a woman.

Another explanation is that until the Israelites were in the desert, they were too hungry to wait for the giving of the Torah, so they ate the milk of a woman.

**Talmudic 'fences'**  
 Although the wording only says "nothing," the Talmudic "fences" around the laws, extended the prohibition to eating of such a mixture of milk and meat as to include the derivation of any type of "clean" animals. In the same way, the "its mother's milk" is taken to mean all milk and meat.

Maimonides felt that eating in the context of Shavuot was an inference from minor to major, and that if even a minor inference, then how much more so eating forbidden. In his opinion, Rabbi Isaac Grunfeld, in his commentary "The Jewish Diet" (London, Schocken, 2 vols., 1939), notes that Rabbi Hirsch concluded that cooking milk and meat together is prohibited, this is more than a Talmudic fence, but rather a reconstruction of the Universal Law of the Torah, in which each species is guarded and mixing two disparate species would interfere with the integrity of the Universal Order. In this, Hirsch was in agreement with the Kabbalists who put the milk-meat injunction in the feminine category, along with the prohibition against wearing clothes made of a mixture of wool and linen or letting cattle breed with a different kind. The mixture of species not only interferes with the microcosmos, but also brings the macrocosmos into disarray.

**No explanation**  
 None of this explains the origins of the most-milk prohibition or the connection with Shavuot. In the two times the injunction appears in the context of Shavuot, some commentators follow Maimonides (Rabbi Moshe ben Nahman) in his view that whereas the ulterior motive is hidden from man, the basis of the injunction is an effort to avoid the cruelty shown to the animals involved. He compares it to the laws about not killing a mother and its offspring on the same day, and not taking the eggs from a bird's nest in the presence of the mother-bird.

Abraham Joshua Heschel felt that goat's milk was the perfect food by which man could live and be nourished without any supplements. Therefore, mixing it with anything would be destroying perfection.

Maimonides, however, wrote in his "Guide for the Perplexed" (3:48): "Meat boiled in milk is undoubtedly gross food and causes overfullness; but I think that it is most probably it is also prohibited because it is somehow connected with idolatry, forming perhaps part of the services, or being used on some festival of the heathen. I find a support for this view in the circumstances that the Law mentions the prohibition twice after the commandment given concerning the festival... as if to say, When you come before Me on your festival, do not seethe your food in the manner of the heathen. This I consider the best reason for the prohibition."

Maimonides' hunch that the prohibition is connected with idolatry is generally supported now. In 1936 H.L. Ginsberg published a Canaanite text describing ceremonies pertaining to the fertility of the soil. One of the lines of this text was reconstructed to read "Boil a kid in milk, a lamb



in butter." From this, Umberto Cassuto paraphrased the passage in Exodus 23:18:

"Although the first of the first fruits of your ground, that is the best and choicest of the first fruits of your ground, you shall bring into the house of the Lord thy God, just as the Canaanites bring the First-fruits to the house of their gods, yet you shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk, according to the heartless custom that they practice on their festival of First-fruits."

Those opinions are substantiated by the fact that the custom of boiling a kid in milk, usually its own mother's milk, is a ceremony still observed in the Middle East. Sir James Frazer noted it in his "Folk-Lore in the Old Testament" (1918), and Mrs. Pinn in her "Folk-Lore in the Old Testament" (1923). The rite has been noticed among the Beduins today, as well.

**Tenuous connection**  
 The connection of the custom with Shavuot in particular is more tenuous. There is no reason to feel that a cause and effect existed in that the Israelites saw Canaanites butchering a kid in their late-spring fertility rite and immediately rejected this ceremony. Neither can it be assumed that this ritual took place only once a year. But as it is certain that this was a fertility rite of sorts, the reason for the prohibition may be similar to that of a prohibition against eating blood or certain fats. Milk, blood, and fats are symbols of life and fertility. To kill a kid and boil it in the result of its mother's fertility, i.e. the milk, negates the symbol. This would be a device similar to that used in "black humour," and is not particularly appropriate to fertility rites.

None the less, the location of the prohibition in the context of Shavuot is more than an accident. A festival of First-fruits is obviously a celebration of the fertility of the land. And our ancestors rejected a common Middle Eastern practice and made this rejection a central facet of Jewish dietary regulations. Yet the idea of milk and meat remains linked to Shavuot in the custom of eating milk foods in the most popular one being cheese blintzes on the holiday even after it became the Festival of the Giving of the Torah and not merely that of First-fruits.

THE JERUSALEM POST SHAVUOT SUPPLEMENT

Special to The Jerusalem Post

ONE of this year's Israel Prizes, awarded annually on Independence Day, was presented to the Complete Israeli Talmud Institute of the Rabbi Hertzog Binet World Academy for the first scientific edition of the Mishna and the Talmud. The edition, with variant readings, is scheduled to run into over 50 large volumes.

This is the first time that the Israel Prize for Torah Literature has been awarded not to an individual scholar but to a group of scholars, for the collective achievement of a team of 30 scholars and research workers, headed by Rabbi Nissan Zacks and Moshe Herschler. The Director-General of the Institute is Rabbi Yehoshua Hutner. Rabbi Zacks was last week awarded the Jerusalem Municipality's Rabbi Kook Prize.

The scientific edition is based on all the extant manuscripts of the Mishna and the Talmud, running into their hundreds, and scores of thousands of fragments of the Cairo Geniza scattered over all the important libraries throughout the world. These manuscripts and fragments were written between the 7th and 15th centuries — that is, until the invention of print — in Babylon, Spain, North Africa, France, Germany and the Balkans. They present the widest possible range of textual variants in both style and content and in spellings of the Hebrew and Aramaic languages through all their stages of development.

The first two volumes of Mishna Order Zeraim, and Tractate Ketubot

of the Babylonian Talmud, have so far appeared.

THE Academy is also publishing the Talmudic Encyclopedia, of which volume 14 has just appeared together with a revised edition of volume 1. The 14 volumes contain about 1,500 Halachic articles out of the 4,000 that the Encyclopedia is scheduled to cover. The Encyclopedia is being prepared by a team of fifty Rabbinic scholars and research workers, headed by Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin.

The Encyclopedia digests the contents of more than 20,000 printed books and manuscripts written over a period of about 2,500 years. Some years ago, the late Professor Isidore Epstein, who did the Soncino English edition of the Talmud, in collaboration with Dr. Harry Freedman, began work on an English abridged edition of the Talmudic Encyclopedia. The first volume appeared recently and the second is due to appear shortly.

ANOTHER project of the Academy is the Harry Fischel Institute for Torah Jurisprudence, which was founded by the late Chief Rabbi Kook in 1932. Twenty-five Dayanim serving on Rabbinical Courts in Israel received their training at the Institute.

The Institute has a Department for Advanced Study for Yeshiva Graduates, in which some 50 students are training for Rabbinic posts and lectureships in yeshiva high schools.

Rabbi She'ar-Yashuv Cohen, Jerusalem Municipal Councilor, is Chairman of the Board of the Institute.

## Publishing and research



Mossad Harav Kook's stand at the recent Sixth Jerusalem International Book Fair won compliments from other exhibitors and visitors.

By Aaron Sittner

MOSSAD Harav Kook, a 30-year-old foundation named for this country's first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi, has three aims: to issue scholarly editions of standard Jewish texts and commentaries; to publish Rabbinical works — as yet unpublished — originating in the early and middle Medieval period; and to support and encourage religious scholars in their research work.

The foundation has published about 1,200 titles, many of them unacceptable to commercial publishers on economic grounds. These include highly specialized works in the field of *Piyut* (liturgical poetry), Kabbala, bibliography and various compendia.

Besides its booklist, Mossad Harav Kook publishes a monthly periodical, "Sinai." The magazine, long a popular fixture among the Hebrew-reading public, specializes in bibliography, biography and history. Its contributors and subscribers include Jews in the Diaspora as well as Israel.

Among the major projects under way at the foundation is a complete series of Maimonides' works — a scientific edition of the "Yad Hachazaka" and the "Sefer Hamitzvot," a popular, vocalized edition with commentary; a new Hebrew translation of the "Perush Hamishnayot," from the Arabic original; and Maimonides' complete medical works.

"Nave Yehoshua" is the foundation's own kole — a graduate-level yeshiva where the students, mostly married men, are given financial support to enable them to devote full time to the study of the Talmud. Another educational project is an institute that prepares ordained rabbis for non-pulpit positions, such as scientific scholarship in Jewish literature and for teaching Jewish subjects in Israel's secondary schools.

Three other institutions within the Mossad are the library, one of the most extensive in Israel; the research institute of Kabbala and Hasidism; and the Ginzakh — the official archives of the Religious Zionist Movement.

PAGE THIRTEEN







On the yahrzeit (death anniversary) of their Rebbe, Hassidim gather in joyful assembly, raising a cup and recounting his life and teaching, for their own elevation, and also so that the memory of the Tzaddik shall be kept alive. On Shavuot night a little over 200 years ago, Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer BA'AL

SHEM TOV (Besht), the founder of Hassidism, having completed his task, aged about 60, passed away. Here Rabbi Dr. ISRAEL WEINSTOCK, head of the Institute for Kabbala and Hassidism in Jerusalem and a seventh-generation descendant of the Ba'al Shem Tov, tells his story.

and return!" The world turned like a rock for him. Yet, he stood like a rock and replied: "No, I will not! I will not give in until I reach the sacred object of my desire." The ship set sail. On the way there arose a terrible storm, and the ship seemed doomed. Finally the Ba'al Shem Tov bent his head and humbly said: "Master of the Universe, I blot out my will before Yours!" Thereupon a wind calmed the waves and drove the ship back to its port of exit, Istanbul.

Broken hearted, the Ba'al Shem Tov left the ship and set out at once for home. He recognized that he had not come down into this world to redeem himself. His task was to pass on what had been revealed to him to his brothers in exile, to strengthen their weakened spirits, that they might hold out in the darkness of the Galut, until the Lord would have mercy upon His people and the Redemption would break forth like the dawn.

As soon as the Ba'al Shem Tov had turned back, his spirit returned to him and the fountains of his faith, even growing in strength from day to day. When he reached his hometown, his mind was radiating with a power beyond anything he had ever known in the past. Soon the Besht's trail, straw-covered Belt Hamidraah in Medzibosh became the lighthouse of Hassidism that shone out mightily in all directions, attracting some of the most alert minds and scholars — foremost among them the Great Maggid, Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezritch, who the Besht selected to become his successor, and who actually established and organized Hassidism as the great movement it became.

LIKE the Ba'al Shem Tov's love of God and the Jewish People, so his love of Eretz Yisrael, too, struck deep roots in the hearts of his disciples and their followers. And it, too, did not remain theory; it was soon translated into action. In 1774 — about 15 years after the Besht's death — a group of about 300 Hassidim, headed by Rabbi Menahem Mendel of Vitebsk and Rabbi Avraham of Kalisk, set out for and reached Eretz Yisrael. They settled in Galilee, mainly in Safed and in Tiberias (where the latter two Rabbis are buried).

Love of the land  
The epistles which those redeemed enthusiasts wrote to their brothers still languishing in exile glow with a love of the land and a holy burning mission to act, and call others to act, for its revival and resettlement, that evoke a deep echo even in the hearts of those who read them today:

- "Eretz Yisrael — God's eyes rest on it forever."
- "Eretz Yisrael — that is the very Shekhina itself!"
- "Come all of you in a common bond, linked together in one soul, in love in brotherhood and comradeship... to resettle the land in its entirety... that the nation may be reborn as one stroke. This is the duty that we have been hoping for, let us be glad and rejoice with our beloved land. For it is for you and for us it rebuild the House of the Lord, and all Israel must vigorously pursue the resettlement of the Holy Land... For the doing of the Fathers shall be inherited by the sons."

This is the clarion call issued by those Hassidim of 200 years ago. Is there much that can add to that would improve on it today? Thus the seed sown by Rabbi Ba'al Shem Tov in the hearts of his faithful was bearing fruit. The love of the Holy Land and the longing for its active redemption, took up a distinguished place in the thought of Hassidic spokesmen throughout the following generations. They laid the foundation and opened up the hearts for the forthcoming concepts of national renaissance and the rebuilding of the homeland.

In the wake of those first Hassidim who had engaged in resettling the Galilee came many others to guard the walls of the Old Yishuv, and at the same time laid the foundations for the extended rebuilding of the land.

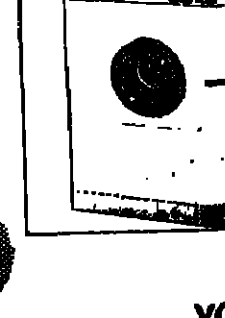
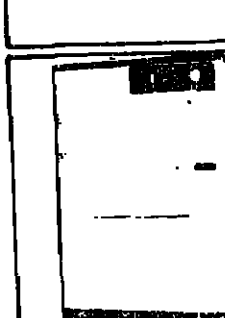
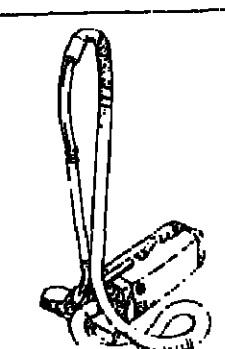
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THE JERUSALEM POST SHAVUOT SUPPLEMENT

PAGE SEVENTEEN

## The Besht's greatest wonder

COME 250 years ago the Ba'al Shem Tov came out of nowhere onto the stage of Jewish history, reshaping the faith and the face of his people as few men before him and no one after him.

Born in Okop, Podolia in about 1700 to poor and aged parents, he was early left an orphan. As a boy, a teacher took Israel into his heder, where he could attend to the small children, teaching them with love and song the Alef-Bet and the first rudiments of Judaism, an inclination that remained with him for the rest of his life. A little later he attached himself to a Bet Midrash as a sort of shanass (sextant); he kept the place clean, and between the times of prayer, when no one was about, he would glance into some of the sacred books that filled the shelves.

But Israel's heart was searching really not for learning or wisdom; it was searching for the Creator — and Him he could find more easily in the open, in nature. So he loved to roam about alone in the fields and the forests, which certainly did not earn him the regard of the Rabbis and lay leaders, who expected a young man of his age to spend his time bent over the volumes of the Talmud.

### Second wife

Town life did not agree with young Israel. He married once, and his wife had died shortly after the wedding and then he married a young woman who was not frightened off by that unusual man. Everybody else — including her own learned elder brother (the father had died) — may have thought him rather uncouth and ignorant; that was how the Besht for a long time chose to appear to the outside world — but she felt that there was more behind it all, and was ready to share his strange life and secret with him.

Together they left town and took up their abode in a hut somewhere in the Carpathian mountains. Israel would wander about on the hills and in the valleys, seeking and finding everywhere, in every tree and in every blade of grass, what he was looking for: the Heavenly Father and Creator. Those glory filled the whole earth. He found Him revealed also in the mystic writings that had come to his hands in some mysterious way from a saintly old man named Adam. For livelihood Israel would from time to time dig some clay, which his wife took to town to sell and then to buy their meagre daily needs. For a short while they also conducted an inn to feed wayfarers.

In the solitude of nature and his meditation, the Besht found his own way of serving the Creator: prayer, which you uttered not only with your lips and your heart, but where, looking at the words in the Siddur (Prayerbook), you could actually see, behind every letter, Divinity — for every letter like every blade of grass, has its root in the Divine. Looking at the one or touching the other, you would really link yourself to the everlasting source; and this supreme experience of devekut (attachment to the Divine) would fill your heart with boundless joy. Thus, and thus only, in the view of the Besht, should a Jew live and serve his Creator. This was the lesson of that verse of Psalms 100-2, which has become the quintessence of all the Besht's personal teaching: "Yidus

et Hashem besimcha" — "Serve the Lord with Joy!"

And what was true for prayer went equally for the study of Torah. It had meaning only insofar as you saw, behind every word, precept and thought, the Divine source whence it came and towards which it should lead you. That was, according to the Besht, how a Jew could, and should, learn Torah or study the Talmud and even the Shulchan Arukh (Code of Jews) or, for that matter, also fulfill every mitzva (Commandment). Every word and motion must lead you to devekut, to a deeper inner attachment to the Divine root — otherwise you were just uttering dead words, touching a dead body, without life and soul! One can well imagine how this novel idea would appeal to all the Talmudists of the old school, who were sure they were fulfilling the greatest of mitzvot by learning, and sharp-wittedly disputing Torah in the way they did.

THUS passed the years of fermentation. One day the Besht felt (it is recorded in one of his letters) he was approaching his destination. He would soon be ready to reveal himself in his true light: to go out to the people to teach them his new and holy ways.

Again he started by teaching the young for a short time, in Tluste; then he set out on his mission. Like the grandmaster of the Kabbala, the Ari (Rabbi Yitzhak Lurid-Ashkenasi of Safed), some 150 years before him — whom he, and later also his followers, regarded as his shining master and image — the Besht, too was in his thirties when he heard and followed the divine call. He began to wander through the Jewish communities of Podolia, Volhynia and Galicia, a strange, plain but luminous man.

The great and learned could first see little in that peculiar person: He was hardly their type of scholar (and what else counted in their eyes?). But the common people, the poor artisans, the inn-keepers and pedlars — those who, being simple and mostly ignorant, counted, like himself, little in the eyes of the scholars, the rich and the important — felt drawn to this unusual man who radiated faith, love and regard to every human being, no matter who he was, and even to every beast. He seemed to have but one wish: to ease their burden, to help them all. So it was but natural that simple folk would turn to the migrating Rabbi Israel with their worries and troubles. The wife or the child of the one was ill, so he went to that saintly man, shared his sorrow, gave him hope, and wrote out some mysterious Divine Name (he had adopted from the mystic scripts) or a piece of parchment or paper to be placed on the sick — and they would be cured. Thus started Rabbi Israel's fame, and also the name by which he was soon known to all and sundry in the lands of his migrations (he actually added it to his signature) and that would remain revered in the memory of coming generations: Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem — the Master of the Holy Name.

Yes, Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem was a wonder-worker. But the greatest of all the wonders he performed was that he lifted the many low and downtrodden and gave them regard for themselves; made them realize that, no matter what the learned and rich might think of them, in the eyes of the Heavenly

Father they were all his beloved children and Jews; and their simple prayer, uttered with a humble heart with love and with joy, was more precious to Him than all the learned discourses and even meditations of the great and the proud. Thus Rabbi Israel gave the masses of the Jewish People faith — faith in themselves and faith in their living Father in Heaven.

THE Besht — like the Ari before him — did not write down his doctrines. He did not even preach or teach. He just spoke, conversed — not like the Ari with a few select, but with one and all; with the simple folk in the street and in the marketplace, or, as it frequently happened, with some learned person who may have come to take the measure of that peculiar saint. In every person he saw the Divine. Every Jew — this was one of the Besht's most human concepts (rooted in the basic doctrines of the Ari) — was a limb of the Shekhina (Divine Presence). As long as he remained attached, even by the slenderest thread there was hope for him: he could regain strength, he could be saved. Only if Heaven forbid, the final cord was severed — as when a Jew would, of his own accord, give up his faith to embrace a strange God — only then would he be lost; and then how great was the sorrow and the pain for us and even for the Father in Heaven! (That is why the Besht wept when he heard of the Frankist heretics who had embraced Christianity; Man's supreme aim should be to live in constant devekut (attachment) to the Divine; not only when praying, but in every thought and every act of life. "Bechol darachecha da'einu" — "In all thy ways thou shalt know Him" (Proverbs 3:6). This in itself will give you life and strength. This in itself will give you joy — you and also your Heavenly Father.

In keeping with this basic concept, the Besht — in distinct contrast to the Ari — abhorred and opposed every kind of asceticism as leading away from joy to sadness or depression, which in itself is a mortal sin.

### Simple teachings

These are some of the doctrines which Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem Tov spread wherever he went. That was a kind of teaching which even the simplest mind could comprehend. And it was this same simple philosophy that attracted to the Besht some of the most brilliant minds of his time, who recognized it for what it was: a most profound, revolutionary reorientation in the concepts of Judaism, a new way for the Jew to live his life and serve his Creator.

BUT Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem Tov was not only the founder of Hassidism; he was also the man who brought nearer the Jewish People's redemption. This is how he saw himself, and this is how he was looked upon by his adherents in his own time and in following generations.

In that famous letter that he addressed to his learned brother-in-law, Rabbi Gershon of Kutv (in Yiddish: Kitev), who had left Poland and settled in the Holy Land (his grave was recently rediscovered and restored in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives), the Besht reports a powerful experience he had had in one of his dreams:

His soul ascended to the heavens, rising higher and higher, till it reached the Hall of the Messiah. When he saw the Messiah, he asked him: "When will you come, master?" Whereupon the Messiah answered him: "When your fountains will spread out, and your teaching will be revealed throughout the world, then there will come a time of favour and salvation!" The meaning of this vision: The doctrine of the Ba'al Shem Hassidim, is a preparation for the redemption; it will pave the way for the coming of the Messiah.

Redemption is the constant heart-longing of the entire Jewish People. Yet, at the same time, it is a task that rests on every single Jew who must do his personal share to bring nearer its fulfillment. Thus records the Besht's colleague-disciple Rabbi Pinhas of Karetz, in the name of the master: "Korva el nafshi ge'ala (Psalm 69:19 — included in the Sabbath hymn Lecha dodi) — every Jew must pray and work for the redemption of his own soul; thereby he brings nearer the general redemption. This thought links up closely with what Rabbi Nahum of Chernobyl heard from the lips of the Besht: "Every single Jew must repair and prepare that specific part of the Messiah-body that belongs to his own soul!"

### Eretz Yisrael

These telling sayings and images reveal to us the innermost strivings of the Ba'al Shem Tov to the Sphere of Redemption: Eretz Yisrael. And many are the signs which testify to the deep stirring of this longing in his soul. Rabbi Gershon of Kitev, who was the first to bring his brother-in-law's teachings to the Holy Land, reports to him: "Your name is well-known at the Gates of Jerusalem," and he urges him to come and set up his home there. And the Besht writes to Rabbi Gershon: "The Lord knows I have not given up my hope of journeying to Eretz Yisrael," and he begs of him: "Please, do pray for me that I may be granted to attach myself to the Lord's heritage (Eretz Yisrael) while (still) alive!"

And thus records the Hassidic tradition: Rabbi Israel Ba'al Shem Tov actually left his home in Medzibosh, and started out, together with his family, for the Holy Land. All along the way there arose grave difficulties and obstacles to prevent the Besht from reaching his destination. His soul became darkened and the well of his inspiration began to dry up. Yet, he carried on relentlessly from one place to another, from land to land. At last he arrived in Istanbul at the Bosphorus, whence a boat could easily carry him across to the Holy Land. There he had again one of his fateful visionary experiences: Rabbi Natani Katz (author of "Semichat Hashamin," who had been Rabbi of Frankfurt and Posen-Poznan among other places), who 24 years earlier had set out for Eretz Yisrael but died and lay buried in Istanbul, appeared to him in his dream and warned him: "Turn and go back to your old home! You shall not see Jerusalem. And if you do not turn back, you will fall by the road — like me — and be buried in foreign soil."

But even this grave warning did not deter the Besht. He boarded the next ship that was due to sail for Jaffa. Then he heard a heavenly voice commanding him: "Descend





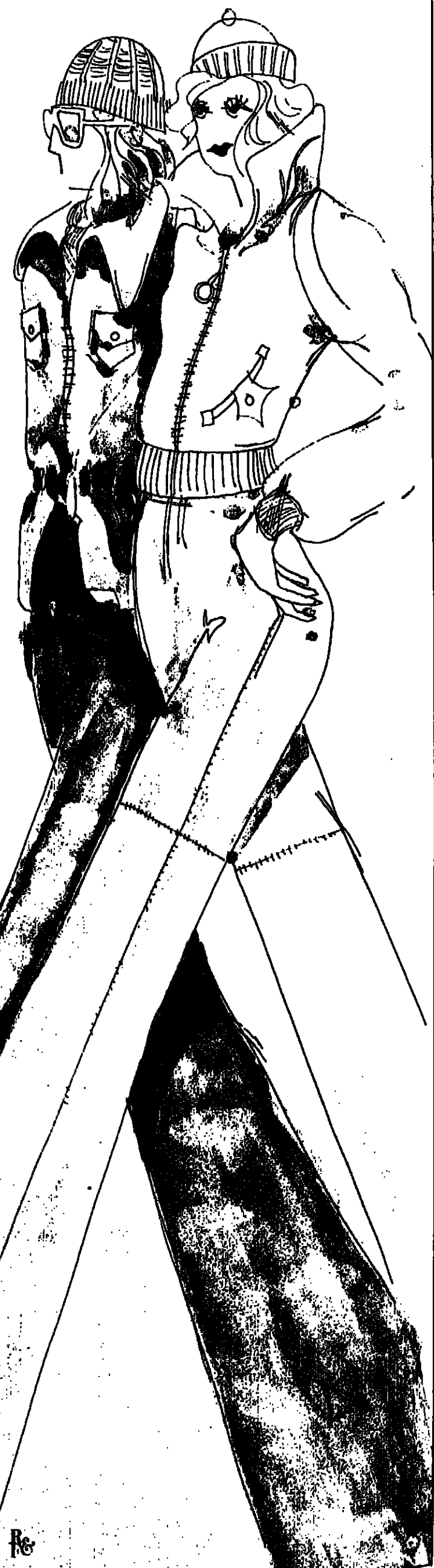
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...between the World  
...produced many writers of  
...These men described the de-  
...of their society in works  
...become literary classics.  
...The Magic Mountain" and  
...The Trial" are perhaps  
...representatives of this  
...of despair. Among the in-  
...there were those who also  
...after the wisdom which  
...helped their pain and that  
...culture. Thus a writer like  
...Hesse, in "Siddhartha,"  
...to find in the wisdom of  
...the brake to Western man's  
...2.

...Prague there was a young  
...Langer, born on April 7,  
...who also went to the East.  
...went not to India, but to  
...small town of Belz, "the  
...Rome" in Eastern Galicia,  
...of some 3,000 inhabitants,  
...of them Jews, all of these  
...poor. What made this shift  
...from its sisters was the  
...of the Belz Rebbe  
...the reader who transformed the  
...of misery into beauty, the  
...of holiness. It is the Belz  
...of the beauty of holiness  
...the subject of Langer's book.

...book first appeared in  
...in 1957. The English transla-  
...under review was published a  
...of a century later, and  
...seems to have been republi-  
...why it has not joined the long  
...of Judaism now available in  
...book is beyond my understand-  
...This review is now written in  
...line that someone will take  
...of an out-of-print book that  
...it be reprinted.

### Travelled to Belz

The Nine Gates to the Chassidic  
...opens with a foreword  
...Frankel Langer, Jiri's brother,  
...told how Jiri at 19 left his  
...Prague environment  
...travelled to Belz. The process  
...adaptation to Belz cost young  
...Langer his youth and health.  
...much pain Jiri adopted the  
...of the Belz Hassidim, and  
...led to believe that he main-  
...that way of life until his  
...from nephritis in Tel Aviv  
...year ago.

...eventually returned to Prague  
...look Belz with him. The re-  
...of his friends — including Al-  
...Yuchs, a Jewish convert to Chas-  
...ism; Franz Kafka, whose  
...contains several Hassidic tales  
...to him by Langer; Max Brod,  
...died after him during his  
...days in Tel Aviv — and family  
...had to have been one of utter  
...Frankel compares the Lan-  
...family's reaction to the "new"  
...to "metamorphosis." Indicative of  
...and his Hassidic life-style is  
...experience in the Austro-Hun-  
...man Army in World War I. Jiri  
...an hour in morning prayer,  
...not eat army food, and  
...to carry a rifle on Shabbat,  
...of which led to a court-martial

### Nothing is 'simple'

The stories are expressive of the  
...wonder felt by the Hassid. Nothing  
...in the Hassid's life is "simple"; on  
...the contrary, the smallest event is  
...filled with mystery and depth of  
...meaning. No space on the plane's  
...surface is without its secrets. In  
...short, the Hassid's world is alive  
...with meaning. Even food, especially  
...holiday food, is filled with signifi-  
...cance. Illustrative of the symbolic  
...value of food is the story of Reb  
...Mayer of Przemyśl, who did not  
...know if he should eat one, two, or  
...three *kreplach* (dumplings) on Shab-  
...vat. Reb Mayer's problem is solved  
...by the holy Reb Yisroel of Ri-  
...zhin, who directs him to eat one  
...dumpling, but "such a big one that  
...it should be equal in volume to  
...two *kreplach*." In true Hassidic fa-  
...shion, Langer explains that it is im-  
...possible to really understand the  
...deeper meaning of all this. Yet,  
...we could venture a guess — in Lan-  
...ger's words — that "the festival of  
...Pentecost is a day when God joins  
...Himself, through the medium of  
...the revealed Law, into one indi-  
...visible, mystical unity with Israel.  
...In other words, two *kreplach* which  
...in substance are only one."

From this story we see the  
...manner in which Hassidic society  
...invested even food with cosmic  
...significance. The story also illus-  
...trates Langer's ability to introduce  
...the non-Hassidic public to the "mys-  
...teries." He is able to weave his  
...explanations into the fabric of the  
...story in an unobtrusive fashion, and  
...even his Yiddishisms fit well into  
...the story line.

The book is rich in those Yiddish  
...isms. The use of Yiddish terms  
...helps create the impression that we  
...are hearing and not reading Hassidic  
...tales. Further, the reader is intro-  
...duced to a whole universe of Yid-  
...dish expressions which represent  
...much of the Hassidic dress not  
...known to most Jews. The reader is intro-  
...duced to the different types of people  
...who dwell in the Hassidic commu-  
...nity. There is, for example, the  
..."silk young man" type — in Yid-

THE NINE GATES TO THE  
CHASSIDIC MYSTERIES by  
Jiri Langer. Translated from  
the Czech by Stephen Jolly.  
New York, David McKay, \$3.95.

Reviewed by  
Neal P. Rose

dish: "a *zabener yunger manchik*."  
Langer explains that this "young  
silk" is a type of young man who  
is "an exceptionally learned man,  
perfect in godliness, and richly en-  
dowed with all virtues; a rare,  
exceedingly rare fellow, a silken  
fellow."

The reader learns of another  
Yiddish expression: *chayok*. This  
term refers to one who has become  
totally unconcerned with the world  
and especially has little concern for  
his physical appearance. Langer  
tells us that he became a *chayok*.  
Yet, there is much in the book to  
show that Langer was far from be-  
ing unaware of the greater world  
around him. He tells us that the  
Hassidic Kabbala is linked to Pla-  
tonic and Neo-Platonic notions. The  
reader learns that the Kabbalistic  
figures and letters is close to the  
Pythagorean number mysticism. A  
Westernized Jew finds out that  
Hassidism professes the notion of  
transmigration of souls. But, unlike  
Hinduism and Buddhism, Kabbala  
teaches that human souls can never  
be re-incarnated in the form of  
animals or plants.

Langer, the *chayok*, gives an ex-  
planation of the *Tzefin* (Phylac-  
teries). He explains that the arm  
piece has a knot on it in the shape  
of the Hebrew letter "Yod," which  
must never be covered. Using a pun  
based on the Yiddish, Langer ex-  
plains that "Yod" is a symbol of  
Yid (Yiddish for Jew), and as the  
"Yod" of the *Tzefin* must never  
be covered so, too, the "Yid" (the  
Jew) must always be open and act  
without guile. To this traditional  
Hassidic teaching, a note is append-  
ed which directs the reader to  
Langer's article on the psychoana-  
lytic meaning of *Tzefin* published  
in the International Freudian Journal,  
"Imago." The pages of such  
journals are not the usual habitat  
of pure-bred *chayokes*!

"Nine Gates" in short, reflects  
the work of a man who combined  
and successfully harmonized in  
himself many different experiences  
and interests.

### Rebbe as model

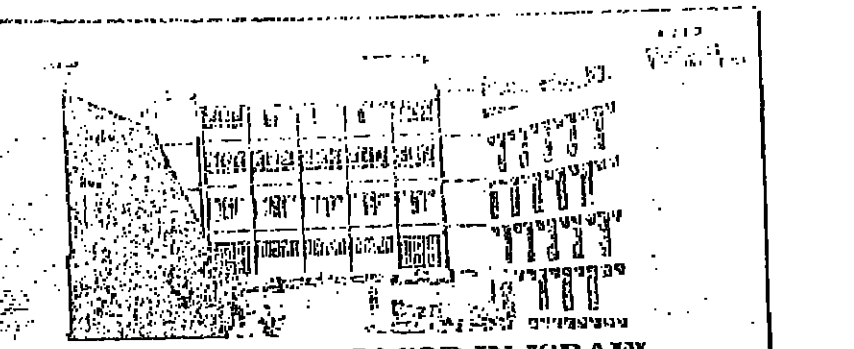
The Hassid, Langer tells us, learns  
to live a real life by watching his  
Rebbe do the same. The Rebbe be-  
comes an accessible model of  
"maximalized living" — so much  
so that the Hassid learns to do even  
the most mundane things in a holy  
way. So we have the story of Reb  
Uri of Strelak who went to the  
court of Reb Yibi in order to learn  
how to eat and transform the energy  
of food into power to be used by  
him for worship and Tora study.

It was this knowledge of how to  
live that Langer sought and ap-  
parently found in Belz. In this way  
Langer's journey to Belz and his  
experiences there parallels the quest  
of Herman Hesse's "Siddhartha." The  
wisdom which Siddhartha learned  
from the old man and the river Jiri  
Langer apparently acquired from  
the Hassidim of Belz and their  
stories.

A new edition of "Nine Gates"  
should have an index of Yiddish  
terms, as well as one of Kabbalistic  
terms, with Langer's explanations.  
This book is vital for its in-  
formational value. But beyond this  
is a fine exposition of a modern  
Jew's attempt at finding wisdom  
within Judaism in a world bereft of  
meaning. It is here that the reader  
will find, as promised, a gateway to  
the mysteries of Hassidism.



(Erna Nahmias)



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  - 7 Rehov Nili, Katanon
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**Edmond Herzl, Kiryat Shmuel**  
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Students at the Jerusalem College of Technology work in electronics courses, above, and computer sciences, right.



## Tradition and technology

held in the Jerusalem Post. The slopes of Olivat Mordechai in Jerusalem a unique institution. Its name — the Jerusalem College of Technology — has made a name for the college in Israel's private and industrial establishments. Its graduates are practical engineers who step into the industrial world with a detailed knowledge of the specific industry. Of importance is the fact that the college produces well balanced, intelligent, idealistic men who are deeply rooted in Jewish tradition.

Students from Israel and the rest of the world met to discuss the needs of technical education in Israel. They argued that there was a need for an institution that would contribute directly to the industries of Israel; differ from the direction of most institutions of higher learning who aim to become another Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) or Harvard; be patterned after the Institutes of Polytechnic of Europe; offer a framework for students studying in Yeshivot and who at present are lost to the economic life of Israel.

It was felt that there is a need to train a person who is equally at home in the 20th century and in the story of J.C.T. begins 3 1/2 years ago, when a group of scientists

from the ages-old Jewish tradition. Only such students can hope to bridge the gap between the religious and non-religious sectors. The group gathered around Professor William Zeev Low, Professor of Physics of the Hebrew University and President of the Physical Society of Israel. Professor Low is the recipient of the Israel Prize of Exact Sciences, the Rothschild Prize of Science and many international honours. He has been concerned with the problem of polarization and fragmentation of Israel's society.

18 students

J.C.T. was founded in 1989 with the first group of 18 students. It was greatly helped by the Kennedy

Foundation of the U.S., in particular through the efforts of Mr. Zeev Wolfson. The Israel Government, and in particular Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir, assisted the College in its initial stages. Due to its unique approach, J.C.T. has attracted outstanding staff members and highly idealistic students. It has received the support of such world renowned scientists and men of letters as Sir Ernst Boris Chain, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Professors Cyril Domb, A. Neuberger, Alvin Radkowsky and others. The students take courses in three Departments: Computer Science and Data Processing; Applied Physics, Electro-optics and Optical Communications; and Electronics and Microwave Electronics.

J.C.T. plans to add new programmes in Polymer Technology, Ceramics, Materials Science, Integrated Microwave Circuits, Feedback and Control, Industrial Economics and Certified Public Accountancy, and a school for training teachers for Israel's technical high schools. The religious studies are similar to those in the traditional higher yeshiva programme except for some emphasis on the clarification of Halacha as it applies to today's technological world. J.C.T. hopes to grow from its present 80 students to about 400 by 1977. The first buildings on the new campus will be completed in 1974.



The third President of the State of Israel, His Excellency Mr. Zalman Shazar, the Guest of Honour at Yeshivat Hakotel on Jerusalem Day.

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With the Bar-Ilan University, as a place to do the study, study and not suffer from the lack of the traditional Jewish education to post modernism, post modernism will be part of the curriculum.

In Central Europe, Austria, and Germany, a century ago, the issue of post modernism arose, and, in accordance with the Habsburg principles of the staunch orthodox local communities, it was decided that they could be performed.

"Unfortunately, the tone in religious matters in Israel has been set by immigrants from East Europe, where no such problems were tackled under the Czarist regime," Prof. Menahem Zvi Kaddari, Rector of Bar-Ilan University, told The Jerusalem Post in a recent interview.

Born into an orthodox family in Hungary in 1925, Prof. Kaddari came to Israel in 1947, after being interned by the British in Cyprus for attempting "illegal" entry into Palestine.

In Zagreb, Yugoslavia, where thousands of refugees waited to go to Palestine, he had been shocked to see that emissaries from Eretz Yisrael refused to provide kosher food. "There had to be a strike before the wrong was put right. The orthodox Jews had no intention of separating themselves from other Jews," Prof. Kaddari told me. But there was an on-slaught on the orthodox way of life from the non-religious. "We simply had to defend ourselves."

Judaism is capable of an infinite variety of interpretation, according to Prof. Kaddari. To be a Jew involves not only a tradition, a philosophical and religious outlook: it is also a way of life. When this way of life is challenged, the religiously-bent Jew feels he must dig in his heels.

## BUTLEDINGE BURJUDGES

### AT BAR-ILAN

**Prof. MENAHEM ZVI KADDARI,**  
Rector of Bar-Ilan University, discusses the  
role of a religious university with  
**SRAYA SHAPIRO.**



This is what happened when the orthodox groups combined to found the Bar-Ilan University 18 years ago, according to Prof. Kaddari.

Bar-Ilan University could easily adopt the Erasmus principle that "Nothing human is foreign to me." The Faculty of Jewish Studies is not the biggest part of its establishment where budgets and facilities are concerned. "We differ from others, however, by insisting on a particular mode of life on the campus. One could not imagine a strip-tease orgy among our students. But when a young man from a traditional home is involved in student life in a university where such things are tolerated, he is likely to join the melee."

Prof. Kaddari dismissed as "childish" objections against a scientific approach made by some party has an agreement with the B.I.U. to print a number of text books recommended by Bar-Ilan

the 5,733 calendar years since the Creation. "Where we differ from others is in looking for the specific Jewish aspects of a doctrine."

In the law faculty, for instance, special stress is laid on the principles of the Jewish legal attitude. The same applies even to the study of music. "We have established a chair in musicology, for many parents would not send their daughters to general academies. And we lay special stress in studying liturgical music, folklore and Hassidic musical lore."

#### School of thought

There is, however, still no "Bar-Ilan school of thought," Prof. Kaddari admitted. "But we are working towards it." The University sponsors a number of scientific publications especially a year-book, "The Dvir," publishing commentary on an agreement with the B.I.U. to print a number of text books recommended by Bar-Ilan

Does the programme imply that life in Eretz Yisrael is an integral part of Jewish existence? — Prof. Kaddari was wary in his answer. "One can lead a Jewish way of life in the Diaspora, of course. But obviously, a full Jewish life

staff. But the main effort of the University so far has been in creating cadres of teachers for the religious trend secondary schools.

It is with an eye to such teachers that the B.I.U. is introducing next year a new interdisciplinary programme. Called Eretz Yisrael Studies, the programme includes lectures on the historical geography and the social and political history of what is included in the biblical "Land of Israel," as well as the study of the area in recent years. Eventually, these studies will be expanded to enable the student to major in them for bachelor and master degrees.

But the main reason why Bar-Ilan is different is in the philosophy of Judaism as understood by the University. "The Torah has been given to living people as a guidance to live by."

is possible only in this country. At the Bar-Ilan students are encouraged to live in the community. Prof. Kaddari was definite: by no means! Bar-Ilan may be fortress built in defence of its values but its doors are open to strangers. Outsiders welcome. Of our 6,000 students many come from non-religious backgrounds, he said. "We have many Hasidim, many Hatzair members, they feel at home here. The idea behind B.I.U. is that it serves as a bridge to other, orthodox, strata of the Jewish people."

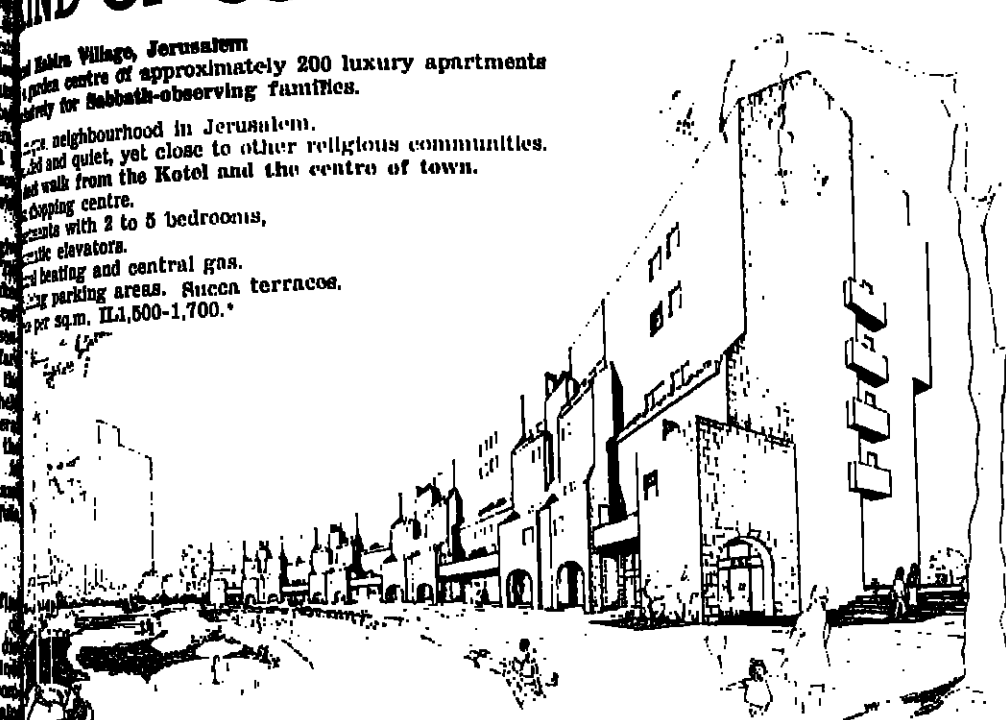
Faculty members often teach outside the campus. ZOA House in Tel Aviv has been Bar-Ilan to help with its cultural activities. Bar-Ilan personnel are active in social welfare work in the localities near the campus. Refresher courses are for municipal employees of several towns. Official "branches" of the university have been opened in Ashkelon, Safad and Zernach, and new centres are planned for Afula and Netanya.

#### University air

A visitor who expects to find a sort of a modern yeshiva at Bar-Ilan campus would be appalled; but Prof. Kaddari says it is natural that a university is completely different. A university staff is composed mainly of trained personnel (Prof. Kaddari graduated from the Hebrew University) who have lived through the co-existence battles between religious and non-religious members of the intelligentsia in the country.

But the main reason why Bar-Ilan is different is in the philosophy of Judaism as understood by the University. "The Torah has been given to living people as a guidance to live by."

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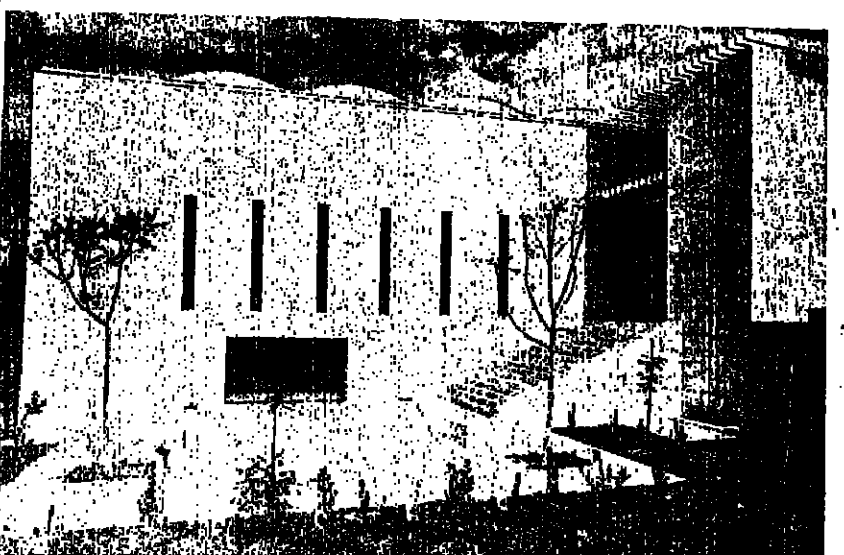
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## LOOKING?

look in THE JERUSALEM POST



Prof. Ezra Spicshandler, dean of the H.U.C.'s Biblical and Archaeological School, talks with some of his students (above). Below is the Hebrew Union College's building, on King David Street in Jerusalem.



THE importance of Israel to American Reform Judaism is demonstrated by the fact that every rabbinical student of the Hebrew Union College — Jewish Institute of Religion, the training ground for American Reform rabbis, has to spend one year at the institution's Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem, says the School's Dean, Professor Ezra Spicshandler. The school was opened in 1933 as a post-doctoral research centre for Bible and archaeology. After the Six Day War, the Year-in-Israel programme for all rabbinical students was instituted.

The Hebrew Union College was founded by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise in Cincinnati in 1875 and in 1950 it merged with Rabbi Stephen S. Wise's Jewish Institute of Religion (founded in New York in 1922). A third centre of the college, in Los Angeles, was chartered in 1954. The lengthy full name of the Jerusalem branch is Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Nelson Glueck School of Bible and Archaeology.

Conceived by the late archaeologist Nelson Glueck, who was President of Hebrew Union College from 1947 until his death in 1971, the School's emphasis originally was on archaeology, with Jewish studies playing a minor role. This emphasis has now been reversed, with Rabbinics occupying about 75 per cent of its curriculum. In addition to courses in Bible, Talmud and contemporary Jewish philosophy, students spend 24 hours a week in an intensive Hebrew upan. Their knowledge of spoken Hebrew and of the country is considered of cardinal importance for their further studies and for their entire careers.

This year HUC-JIR has 64 rabbinical students taking their year in Israel. Another 10 students are working on M.A. degrees or completing their rabbinical studies with a year at the Hebrew University. Most of the students take their year in Israel at the beginning of their five-year ordination course, while they are still single. About one third of the present class is already married, which makes the year here more expensive. It costs

## Training American Reform rabbis in Jerusalem

The Hebrew Union College's school in Jerusalem has shifted its emphasis from archaeology to Jewish studies, writes **ERNIE MEYER.**

\$8,500 for a single student, and about \$5,500 for a married couple. Of the three girls studying at HUC Cincinnati, two have taken the year in Jerusalem and the third is expected here next year. (One woman ordained by the college last year is now practising as an assistant rabbi in a New York congregation.) In addition to studying, the students do volunteer work in poor areas, teach English at the Ben Shimon

agricultural school near Lydda, spend time at kibbutzim and tour the country. One student said of his volunteer work in Jerusalem's Nahalal area that "I got more out of it than I gave."

Prof. Spicshandler says the Jerusalem School's synagogue attracts many Israelis to its Sabbath services. He also said that next year the American Reform youth movement, the National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), will send undergraduate students to spend a year at Kibbutz Ma'ale Hahaim near Jerusalem.

The main archaeology work of the Jerusalem School is concentrated during seven weeks in the summer, when the staff and about 125 students and volunteers dig at Gezer in the Judean foothills east of Ramle. Now under the direction of Dr. Joe Seger, the dig has entered its tenth season this year. Conducted in cooperation with the Smithsonian Institution and Harvard University, the Tel Gezer programme has served as an important training ground for the younger generation of U.S. Biblical archaeologists.

The staff of about 30, most of whom are Harvard-trained, supplement the day's practical labelling with lectures at night. Some of the professors bring their students with them for the summer's dig, the same way they would take them to a physics lab at their home university. Students come from various disciplines and pay (LL2,200) for the season. They get full college credits for their work with exams at the end of the summer. About 40 per cent of the students are non-Jewish.

With all its programmes expanding, the Jerusalem School is improving the facilities of its building, set on eight dunams across the Hinnom Valley from the Citadel. The School recently acquired a long-term lease from the Government for the adjacent three-dunam site, formerly occupied by a branch of the Motor Vehicle Licensing Bureau. New buildings will house additional classrooms, facilities for summer courses and youth programmes.



# When naivete is permissible

Six years after 'The Seventh Day'

By Muki Tzur

"**SHAH LOHAMIM**" ("The Seventh Day") was written as an internal spiritual stocktaking of members of the kibbutz movement. After it appeared (some months after the Six Day War), it became known throughout Israel and was read by wide sectors of the public. What had been an internal, intimate experiment reached the general public and was even translated into a number of languages.

Why did this book influence so many people? Apparently because it touched some inner dimension in the life of Israeli youth — one that generally does not come to public attention. The young Israeli is often bound to his image as a closed person, utterly fearless, devoid of all doubt and hesitation. But we know how false this image is. "Shah Lohamim" gave expression to certain basic positions, and to the secret hopes of Israeli youth.

The book was not edited as a sociological study. We who edited it did not presume to think that we represented a statistical model of Israeli youth. What we sought was that the introspection of individuals should take place in complete freedom. Although the book does not precisely reflect the views of the majority of Israeli youth, it should be emphasized that it did give expression to young Israelis from various walks of life. It is no less representative of Israeli youth than the analyses of agile journalists and various writers of books.

## Born in crisis

It has been said of the kibbutz movement that it is a society possessed of open despair. There is a great deal of validity in this description. The kibbutz movement did not come into being with ideological fanfare or even with proclamations by idealists. The kibbutz movement was born in a moment of great crisis in the life of the revolutionary movement and in the life of the Jewish national movement at the beginning of the century. The crisis that afflicted Jewish youth in waves in the course of the century led to the disintegration of many movements, but also led to a renewed effort by individuals to build a society by means of collective life, creation and refusal to surrender to despair.

Martin Buber called the kibbutz movement "an experiment that did not fail." Herbert Marcuse, when he visited Kibbutz Hula, said: "You have created a myth. If this myth is valid, then you are the last hope of socialism. The kibbutzim are the only socialist experiment that has not shed blood and has not yet turned bourgeois." These formulations by outsiders struck home because they were phrased in the negative. They point to the refusal of the kibbutz to be a utopia and its refusal to give up the dream. In everyday life, it is hard to stand up to this contradiction, and sometimes it causes failure.

As socialists who experienced the collapse of socialism, as Jews who experienced the disintegration of Jewish life, as human beings who prayed for togetherness and were exposed to loneliness — the founders of the kibbutz learned to share their troubles with each other in more than phraseology. In the troubles of the times, in the blind alley in which the movements found themselves after having promised to produce easy solutions, the founders of the kibbutz did not see themselves at liberty to stop everything, or to give in to despair or to a suicidal urge. Despite the profound differences between the fathers and the sons in the kibbutz movement, these traits passed from generation to generation. The unique combination of readiness for ruthless analysis, a desire for candour and inner faith is not peculiar to kibbutz youth alone; it is an attribute of many. But it is the form of life that made possible the sharing of

experience and trial and arriving at understanding through dialogue. What is unique about "Shah Lohamim" is that it deals with Man in time of war; or rather it stems from Man in time of war, from soldiers. Here there is no pacifist blather and no pompous battle slogans, but an inner self-exposure of people leading themselves in extreme borderline situations out of a desire to achieve a deeper understanding of themselves and their society — out of a desire to test the values by which they wish to live.

In the historical situation in which we find ourselves, in the heart of the ongoing conflict between Jews and Arabs, in a storm-driven world in which violence, destruction and cynicism crush all efforts to rebuild society — the desire for change has grown. But it is difficult to express what is going on inside.

If memory does not fail me, the period in which "Shah Lohamim" was written was a unique one. It seemed to us then that we were engaged in the summing up of a long succession of wars that had afflicted our region, that at long last the pattern of death had been broken and new relations would be formed between Jews and Arabs. After the destruction we had seen, we thought that we had reached the end. Although the groups of discussants in "Shah Lohamim" were not politically naive, the things they said were said in a moment when naivete was permissible, when it was clear that we were on the threshold of a new era and therefore dreaming was permissible. It seemed to us that we held important keys to bringing the turn.

It was also a time of unique awakening among the youth of the world. In Paris, in Prague and in the U.S. the youth were trying to bring about the impossible. It seemed that we were about to hurdle a powerful alignment of forces that was preserving grave human distortions.

This hope gave us courage to express what we were undergoing, out of a desire to give expression to the inner struggle and the hesitations, to the nausea and anguishes, the loneliness and helplessness that we felt at various moments during the war.

## Feeling the war

After the book appeared, the terrorist actions began again and the War of Attrition broke out along the Suez Canal. Many kibbutzim started feeling the war situation with growing force. The daily attacks they underwent literally brought the war to their doors. Children slept in shelters for long periods. The Israeli newspapers were full of pictures of soldiers who fell in action. The sense of freedom that many had felt at the end of the war turned into a profound concern that perhaps we were really caught in a vicious circle from which there was no breaking out; that perhaps the Arab-Israeli conflict was a matter of fate.

We felt that political cynicism was celebrating a tremendous victory. What the U.S. had done in Vietnam, Russia did in Czechoslovakia; the rebellion of dreamy students in Paris ended with the drowning of de Gaulle, and the American radicals brought Nixon to power. A wave of sobering-up hit wide circles of youth all over the world and in Israel, too. Only here everything happened right before our eyes. The renewal of the war in our region had to bring about changes in the moods of those participating in the dialogues. The conclusions drawn from the new situation varied, for the people who had participated in "Shah Lohamim" varied in their political outlooks.

Some of the people saw with growing despair that the prospects of peace were rapidly diminishing. But we were caught up in world developments which it was not in

the power of individuals to change. Some wanted Israel to display more political initiative in order to break the vicious cycle, while some preferred to leave the status quo on the assumption that if we were facing war rather than peace, it was better to get good and ready for it from the point of view of strategy. In light of the great expectations, the return to the vicious circle of violence was a difficult experience. People asked themselves what this fate meant. For many, the sense of affinity to the Jewish fate sharpened as the struggle for survival continued.

After a difficult period of security tension, the desire to raise the standard of living grew. Those with low income began to demand quick social change in order to prevent the perpetuation of a big economic gap between various sectors of the public. Protest movements came into being and social tension was felt. All the tension that had become pent up in people while they were engaged in the struggle for physical survival erupted when relative calm came.

Many people were frightened by this turn. It was hard for them to see the connection between the war and the estrangement of people from each other in a period of relative calm and an upward spurt in the standard of living. It was hard for them to feel the connection between the period of tension and the pleasure at the relief of the tension. A person getting up from his sickbed while his body still aches wants to get back into bed. A society accustomed to danger and struggle for survival can — as a result of the pain during the healing — feel a need to return to those situations.

It is in the nature of acute experiences, like war, to seem increasingly beautiful with the passing years. The need to overcome frightening visions, the pride at having stood up to certain borderline situations, and perhaps also the grayness of an everyday life devoid of all drama turn many soldiers into war veterans whose memories have been sweetened by reminiscences of the "good old days". In order to prevent this sort of idealization of war on the part of the peace-time generation, we held our dialogues as close as possible to the time of the events.

But history ignored our intentions. It took another course. The attitude of the participants to "Shah Lohamim" changed — not only because we matured but also because the reality that developed was not the reality we had anticipated. It may well be that if we had known what was in store for us, we wouldn't have had the strength to express what we expressed and we would have been that we would have kept silent more and hoped less.

None of this is intended as an expression of regret over the publication of "Shah Lohamim". It seems to me that it is now more important than ever. The experiences and sensibilities expressed in the book are part of our inner lives. We are penning them up inside ourselves, and if not for that unique moment they would never have been expressed. Despite the fact that the people who spoke in "Shah Lohamim" differed from each other in political outlooks, the book served as a banner to all those who were sensitive to the Arab problem, to all those who thought about the moral implications of war.

Sometimes it seems that some of the motifs appearing in "Shah Lohamim" have been alienated. But they reappear. War is only one aspect of a complex social problem. To be sure, peace does not depend only on us, but without us it will not come about. We have to lay the social and psychological foundations of peace, to engage in economic planning, and so shape our society that the options will remain

## THE HURT OF A SOLDIER

EVERY year during the Independence Day period (but not only then) Israeli schools organize a project in which children send or bring gift packages to soldiers. In each package, a letter from a child is included.

One soldier found in his package a letter from a child in a kibbutz garden in Kfar Saba, saying:

"Dear Soldier, Be well, and murder all the Arabs, and come home safe and sound."

The soldier who received this package, one Yossi, wrote back to the child:

"I would like to tell you what you did to me with the package and with the letter. On the one hand, you made me very happy by the nice thing you did, sending a present to a soldier. But at the same time you caused me pain. It is very painful to read the words: 'Murder all the Arabs.' We are all human beings. The Jews are human beings, and the Arabs are human beings, too, with customs of their own, with a tradition of their own, a religion of their own, education of their own, with wives and children, joys and sorrows, like all the other human beings on earth. The word 'murder' makes it sound as if we soldiers, the soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces, the State of Israel, go out to murder Arabs in order to exterminate them. It hurts very much to think that an Israeli child, who is growing up and being educated in Israel, should think this way."

"We aren't murderers. We are fighting for our existence. Today we are in a situation where we have to kill and fight, because otherwise our security and our existence will be in danger. Even when we kill terrorists we don't kill women and children. One day you will be 18, and you will do your duty when you are called up you will see how clean our army is. Today we must kill in order to survive — but we kill only those who are out to hurt us, and not — as you write — all the Arabs. I hope that we won't have to go to war against them, but if we do, we will go and we will fight and we will beat them, in order that we should be able to go on living in our country. But if that happens, we will do our best not to hurt innocent people."

"Let us wish each other real peace, in which we will only have to be on guard but not fight and kill and be killed."

open. For despite the awareness that we are caught in a circle of political events that is difficult to break, we are not in love with — and do not wish to learn to love — this situation. We must fight with all our might against the conception that war is also to be the lot of our children and that this is what we have to prepare for.

"Shah Lohamim" was written by young Jews in the 20th century. This century was shaped by two events, two earthquakes in the life of contemporary civilization: Hiroshima and Auschwitz. It seems to me that no young person anywhere is free not to relate to these events, which symbolize the possibility of the end of human culture. But the

lessons to be learned from the events are different: Hiroshima proved the absurdity of war, and Auschwitz proved the absurdity of submission. We are seeking our way between these two poles. We have seen that submission does not prevent violence, just as we know that the absence of peace is apt to bring destruction.

Muki Tzur, a member of Kibbutz Ein Gev, wrote this as an introduction to the German edition of "Shah Lohamim" ("The Seventh Day"), due to be published in 1973 in the "Shalom" series, published by the Youth Section of the Hachamim Vekabbolim, 10 Dubnow St., Tel Aviv, of the Editorial Board he is a member.

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Learning on a lathe at the Ahuzat Ya'acov Youth Village in Gan Yavne. (Freidlin)

## A vocational yeshiva

By Aaron Sittner

Jerusalem Post Reporter

A knowledge of the Torah accompanied by a trade or profession will eventually full and rich life.

Talmud, Avot 2:2

On this axiom, a group of private individuals — Israeli Americans — 12 years ago organized the Ahuzat Ya'acov Youth Village in Gan Yavne. The founders, who were later to be joined by the Rabbinical Council of the State (RCA), had no personal

experience in establishing such an institution. They were fathers or grandfathers of students or graduates.

They moved them was a sum of money from the late Ya'acov Greenberg, who had been a Deputy Minister of the Knesset. His plan: to establish a vocational yeshiva for young Jews in the country, there was no other institution that

combined vocational training with religious instruction, since many of these youngsters hailed from observant homes; and

• give them a place to live while they learn, since the overwhelming majority of these children are members of large families suffering from a shortage of living space.

Greenberg's idea slowly took on flesh and blood, and, with further aid from the RCA, began to flourish. Some temporary structures were put up near the Gan Yavne moshava, just off the coastal road between Ashdod and Gadera. Word spread and the enrolment eventually grew to 160 pupils (from all over the country), served by 34 staff members.

In the past 12 years, Ahuzat Ya'acov has graduated 12 classes (the school serves the ninth through 12th grades), and the graduates are now teachers, industrial technicians and Regular Army personnel.

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The daily programme at the village is fashioned after that of the

American yeshiva-day school. The pupils rise at six in the morning and start their day with the Shema service in the school synagogue. This is followed by breakfast, a hearty breakfast that they could receive at home.

Religious studies — Torah, Mishna, Talmud and Halacha — run from 8:15 to 12:45. These classes are followed by lunch, a rest period, and Mishna services. At 2:30 the vocational education and general studies staff takes over, and Ahuzat Ya'acov children learn carpentry and mechanics — according to Ort Training School standards — and mathematics, history, literature and related subjects. The entire course of studies, and the graduation certificates, are prescribed and approved by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

At 6:45 p.m. the children assemble once again in the synagogue for Aravit services, which are followed by dinner and a rest period. Then comes the homework hour, including remedial tutoring, if necessary, by the home teaching staff.

Dean Hersh Galinsky, a recent olah from Charleston, South Carolina, believes the institution's success can be measured by the feeling the children have towards the school as a home even more than as a training centre. He recalls the case of a boy who was required to leave the village for a few weeks, to undergo medical treatment in his home town. When the car came to take the boy home he could not be found anywhere.

After an hour's search the boy was found, cowering behind a large machine in the carpentry shop. Why was he hiding? "I'm afraid they won't let me come back to the village after my operation!"

To expand its services, the village is now building an electronics laboratory and a combination kitchen-dining hall-administration building. As expected, a shortage of funds is delaying progress. But the administrators believe more men of good will come forward, like the founders of 12 years ago, to help solve one of Israel's major current social problems.

## journal of halacha and medicine

Special to The Jerusalem Post

ACCORDING to Halacha (Jewish law), all efforts must be made to cure a sick person. According to Halacha, too, where the saving of life is involved all other laws are suspended (except where one is threatened with death unless he blasphemes God, kills someone, or violates the Biblical incest taboos).

As a result, there is a considerable body of Halachic literature concerning medical problems, especially in modern times.

The Dr. Falk Schlesinger Institute for Medical Halachic Research of Jerusalem's Shalom Zedek Hospital publishes a quarterly in Hebrew called "Asia" ("The Physician"), edited by the Institute's Coordinator, Dr. Avraham Steinberg.

Might issues of "Asia" have so far appeared, containing original articles, abstracts and reports on matters of Halacha and medicine. The original articles have dealt with such topics as what may or must — or may not be done in the emergency ward on the Sabbath; what to do about rubella ("German measles") in pregnant women; medical experiments on animals and human beings; the use of drugs on Yom Kippur, the Sabbath and Passover. The articles are written by rabbis and doctors who take a special interest in and are familiar with one another's fields.

Since the seventh issue, "Asia" also contains English summaries of the articles.

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# Life with the Tora

(Continued from page 3)

blood of the Tora Shch'at Peh, which has always been a living and developing organism. (Works of commentary on the Talmud were called *novellae*.) There were always the more innovative and the more conservative among the rabbinical schools of learning, and the two trends were often in conflict. Malmonides is the archetypal innovator in his commentaries and codes; his opponents in Babylon represent the more conservative and wary approach. The leading Tosaphist of France, Rabenu Tam, was another medieval commentator whose works developed the Talmudic texts rather than merely explained them.

TODAY, Prof. Urbach says, we live in a period of rabbinical conservatism and even retreat. Orthodox Jewry is intent on jealously guarding what it has inherited — rather than developing its heritage in the face of great new challenges, and in particular the challenge of the new Jewish State.

He cites as an example a Halachic work on the laws of Shabbat published in the 'sixties by a well-known Jerusalem rabbi. The book was a code in Orthodox circles and Urbach too considers it excellent — insofar as it goes. It purports to be a manual of Sabbath observance, and indeed it contains all the information and guidance which could possibly be needed by the individual. But not a word about Sabbath observance in the Jewish State. How, ideally, should the Jewish State's police force operate on the Shabbat, or its communications services, or its hospitals? The author does not see any need to refer to such problems.

"The fact is that the larger part of the rabbinical world was not prepared to see in the creation of the State and in the enormous changes which this event wrought in Jewish life a challenge obliging them to study and delve into the Halachic problems posed by this new reality," says Urbach. "Their attitude stemmed from their refusal to identify fully with the State — the continuation of the historical refusal of a large section of Orthodox Jewry to support Zionism or even to take an active part in the redemption of Zion outside the framework of the Zionist Movement."

The reason for this refusal was twofold: ideologically it was

felt that Zionism contravened the belief in the Messiah, which is a cardinal tenet of faith. And in practice, the founders of Zionism were almost all apathetic, or worse, towards religion. They were disciples of the Haskala movement which gravitated away from Jewish tradition and towards Western culture.

The result, according to Urbach, is stagnation in Halachic development, almost total absence of creativity in a field which should be potentially vast: Jewish law for the Jewish State.

Professor Urbach's criticism is without malice. Indeed he does not blame the Orthodox alone. "People don't like to operate under pressure," he says. "The secularist pressure to provide 'solutions' leads to an opposite reaction. Our great innovators of the past would also, no doubt, have refused to produce 'solutions' if they felt they were under pressure. They stalwartly upheld the Biblical precept 'Fear no man'."

## Rabbis defensive

The intrusion of the predominantly secular State into rabbinical and Halachic matters has tended to harden the rabbis into a defensive posture, Urbach feels. The secular State has defined a certain area of its legal system (personal status) as the exclusive ambit of the Rabbinate, and the secularist rulers of that State, who themselves do not subscribe to rabbinical law, stand over the rabbis demanding rulings of a particular kind. Just as an 'irreligious' individual has neither cause nor right to make demands on the Halacha and its dispensers, so too the irreligious State should not make such demands, the professor contends.

The bitterness inherent in the present situation is not confined to the desultory clashes over questions of Halacha. It radiates much further afield, to poison the whole complex of relations between the non-observant majority and their religious heritage. The Tora, after all, is more than a code of do's and don'ts, it is a morality, a philosophy of life. But, says Urbach, because of the rancor surrounding religious-secular clashes in Israel, many young people are deterred from approaching the aggadic (as opposed to Halachic) side of the religion too. Despite the universal search of young people for a deeper meaning to life, for something above and beyond the mundane, there is no large-scale

movement in Israel towards religion. Professor Urbach attributes this directly to the position of religion by the secular State upon the secular majority of its citizens.

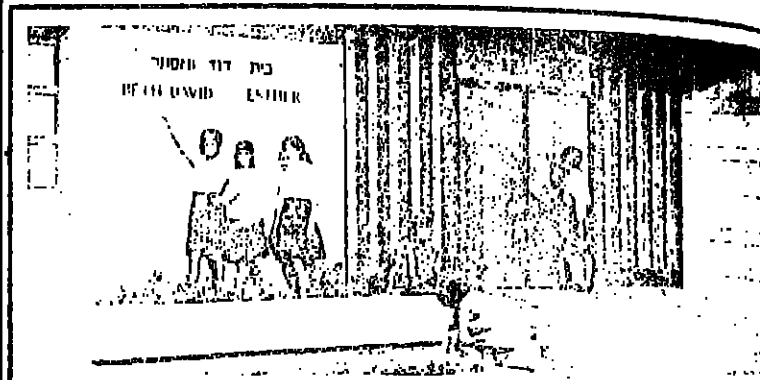
He is not afraid to take his reasoning to its logical conclusion. "I think it would be in the interests of religion itself if it were not foisted onto irreligious people by the State. A separation of religion from the State would be healthier for both."

## Amoral situation

The introduction of civil marriage would do away with the present amoral situation of the State, the unmarried partner being recognized under the law. Premier Meir's argument (on television on Independence Day) that civil marriage in Israel would lead to increased intermarriage abroad is simply not valid or borne out by the facts, says Urbach. The Reform or Conservative rabbis who conduct marriages do not look to Israel for spiritual guidance. With no civil marriage in Israel, the intermarriage rate in American Universities is already approaching 40 per cent.

Professor Urbach advocates the removal of religious coercion and the tensions it engenders. He believes, too, that a new generation of rabbis must be educated — men ready to confront the halachic challenge which the State of Israel poses. They must themselves identify totally with the State. One or two such rabbis already exist, he says, but many more are needed — and this requires new training methods and cannot be achieved overnight.

With the element of coercion removed and a new brand of religious leadership evolved — regular and patriotic men alive to the new challenges which the Haskala must face — there is every chance, Urbach believes, that many more young Israelis would be drawn to religion. In course of time, the character of the State would be changed from within. Religious laws would be applied not by coercion, but because the majority of the people favoured them. "...And they shall all have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my statutes, and observe my judgements, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant... they and their children and their children's children forever..." (Ezekiel 37, 24-25).



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# Jerusalem World Centre of colleges for Higher Jewish learning

Interview with Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen, Chancellor of the Midrashe-Jerusalem Seminary, and Dean of the Harry Fischel Institute.

The world of higher Jewish learning of our age represents an interesting paradox: on one hand there are the many yeshivot which are preparing spiritually and intellectually, both in quantity as well as quality. Their number has grown steadily and they include great scholars and outstanding scholars. On the other hand, the rabbinical institutions are now adopting an ever increasing number of candidates, the lack of which candidates becomes more and more apparent. Just at a time when the number of outstanding yeshiva students is growing, we realize that personal attitudes and great Torah scholarship are not sufficient in order to fill a community or to grasp the problems which come up before rabbinical courts. We are in need of a new and daring approach to train spiritual leaders for this modern age.

Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen, Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, who is a Torah scholar active in community affairs, is keenly aware of the two aspects of this important problem. Perhaps that is why he tries to grapple with the paradox and to forge a bridge between the spiritual world and the needs of the community at large, while carefully introducing "revolution" without significant changes in the pattern of the yeshivot. He tries to attain their curriculum to modern needs and problems. Rabbi Cohen personally applies this method by means of a Torah centre which he heads and which functions along two parallel lines: the Harry Fischel Institute, which is in fact, an institute of higher

learning, and the Harry Fischel Institute which bears his name, with the aim that it should be "the university of the yeshivot." It provides them with an intensive course of study for rabbinical judges and rabbis, preparing them to serve in judicial positions, as yeshiva heads and rabbis. At the same time, the students work on various projects and on the publication of manuscripts on the



Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren lecturing at the Jerusalem Seminary

view. Special emphasis is laid on lectures on Jewish thought and religious philosophy, given by Rabbi S. Y. Cohen. This is the only "kol" where, in addition to Talmud, there are lectures on "Beliefs and Opinions," the "Kuzari," etc. In this way an attempt is made to acquaint the future rabbinical judges and rabbis with the problems of the present generation, and to train them in addressing audiences and lecturing. Jewish philosophy. Once a week, each of the students in turn lectures on a different subject. This is followed by a discussion of a current problem in which the whole group participates.

Rabbi Abraham Rosenbaum, the Institute's Secretary, points out that the students, outstanding scholars from among the higher yeshivot — all married and heads of families — are screened by the admissions committee on the basis of rigorous standards. Vacancies for new students will occur only after some of the present judicial students have graduated. There is a great demand for openings at the Harry Fischel Institute and of the many candidates registering for entrance exams only four or five are accepted.

The Highest College of learning Following the Six Day War, a marked change occurred in the influx to Jerusalem. Young scholars in the Diaspora came to Jerusalem and applied to the Institute to train them over a period of a few years for the office of rabbi in the Diaspora. In taking cognizance of their different needs and standards, a special department was opened for them, and when this grew to large proportions it was decided to establish the Midrashe-Jerusalem Seminary, which is today a unique and independent institution housed in its own building. The Seminary has its own Board of Governors and has already set up organizations of Friends of the Seminary in the U.S.A. and England.

Chief Rabbi A. I. Kook. It was founded by a famous Jew who immigrated to the United States from Europe, where he achieved great success. In his old age, while serving as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Yeshiva University in New York, he wanted to assist Torah education in Eretz Israel and, after consultation with the late Rabbi Kook, he founded the

numerous lectures at the Institute. Chief Rabbi S. Goren has accepted the presidency of the Institute and regularly lectures there. The foremost rabbinic judges in the country teach and lecture at the Harry Fischel Institute, employing original methods such as the presentation of typical court cases and thoroughly analyzing them together with the students. It was decided to establish the Midrashe-Jerusalem Seminary, which is today a unique and independent institution housed in its own building. The Seminary has its own Board of Governors and has already set up organizations of Friends of the Seminary in the U.S.A. and England.

Rabbi Israel Friedman, Vice Chairman of the Seminary, explains: "The Seminary was established to accommodate the large influx of students from abroad, as well as the growing number of Israeli students interested in practical training for the rabbinate. Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen conceived the idea of establishing the Seminary and he formulated its curriculum on the basis of the curriculum of studies which was planned by his late father, Rabbi David Hachasid, the revered Nazir of Jerusalem and endorsed by his mentor Rabbi Kook."

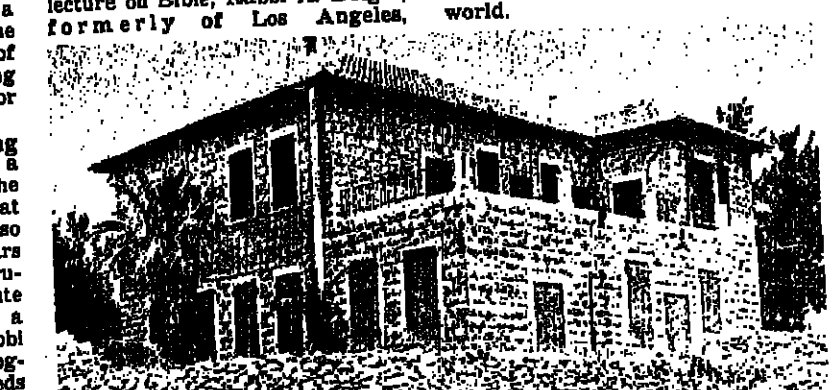
Taking into account the fact that a rabbi should be not only a great Torah scholar but should also be able to deal with present day problems, the College introduced the study of the Bible, practical rabbinics, Jewish philosophy, the art of speech and rhetoric, pedagogy and psychology, etc. Studies take place in accordance with a set schedule. The mornings are devoted, as at other yeshivot, to the study of Talmud, whilst in the afternoons and evenings as well as on Fridays, practical studies are held: Rabbi Yeshayahu Hadari and Rabbi Yehoshua Hachasid, lecture on Bible, Rabbi A. Dolgin, formerly of Los Angeles,

lectures on practical rabbinics and sets tutorial exercises based on his practical experience in the rabbinate; Rabbi David Shapira, the rabbi of Beit Hakerem and a graduate of the Institute, visits together with the students, communal centres, Shechina establishments and other places of practical interest. In the future, the staff of lecturers will include doctors and gynecologists, to acquaint the students with the medical aspect of halachot dealing with medicine and Jewish Law. On two evenings a week, the students hold a "Spiritual Guidance Centre" in cooperation with the Jerusalem Municipality, where they teach and at the same time acquire experience in contact with the public. Rabbi Jacob Pink, Chairman of the Rabbinic Court of Haifa, gives a weekly class and supervises the work of the staff and examinations. Once a month, a written examination is given to ascertain the students' progress. Graduates of the College will be ordained by Rabbi Pink. Chayim Zimmerman, one of the great authorities on halacha who immigrated to Israel recently from the United States, Rabbi Cohen, and sanctioned by Chief Rabbi S. Goren who acts as the Seminary's President. Graduates will receive a special ordainment certificate.

The Seminary aims to train not only rabbis but also other religious functionaries such as shochtim, "mohalim," teachers and religious welfare specialists, as well as religious communal workers.

Rapid development Since its inception three years ago, the Seminary has developed at an exhilarating pace. Increasing numbers of students apply for admission. Today, the Seminary is housed in a building at Ramot Hashkai in the north of the city and will, within the next few months, move to a building that has been acquired for that purpose in the Abu Tor district, in the southern part of Jerusalem.

The Head of the Seminary and the Harry Fischel Institute, Rabbi S. Y. Cohen, tries to clarify that this new idea does not necessarily represent a revolution. In fact, it is a curriculum of Torah studies arranged in accordance with needs. Nevertheless, it appears that the Midrashe-Jerusalem Seminary and its college for Higher Jewish Studies open a new and important page in the mosaic of the yeshiva world.



The building of the Midrashe-Jerusalem Seminary in Abu Tor.

## Jewish youth find selves

Special to The Jerusalem Post

"BEFORE my five months at Ramot Shapira I knew who I was largely because I had been told. Oh, I know may be for some other reasons too. But at Ramot Shapira my own Jewish identity was filled out by the land, language and traditions of my people in a way that my courses and experience at the Academy have made clear."

This extract from a letter written by David, a young man from the U.S., is typical of many received by Ramot Shapira, said Rabbi Dr. Ya'acov Valenstein, founder and mentor and chairman of this new venture for Diaspora and Israeli high-school and college students.

This youth academy, Rabbi Valenstein continued, was established to help combat "the spiritual vacuum weakening Jewish loyalties and attachment to Israel among the majority of Diaspora youth, on the one hand, and to provide guidance for Israeli youth to a fuller Jewish realization of the great historic promise implicit in Israel's restoration to Statehood, on the other." It "seeks to build bridges between these two sections of our

young and imbue them with the concept of the oneness of our people based on the teachings of Judaism."

Ramot Shapira offers courses and uprisings, lasting from six weeks to six months, in Hebrew and Jewish studies, Israel contemporary and Biblical geography, Jewish history and thought, acquaintance with all facets of Israeli life. In addition, short-term seminars are held during the summer vacations on a variety of subjects connected with Jewish life and Israel's achievements. In the planning stages a semester course in Jewish studies to be conducted jointly with a leading Israeli university. Most courses are conducted in cooperation with different departments of the World Zionist Organisation and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Two high school groups — Herzlia of Montreal, and Bloukhar of Jewish of Stamford, Connecticut — are at present at Ramot Shapira. Here is what three students had to say about their expectations and actual experience at Ramot Shapira:

"As I expected, I am now speaking Hebrew much better and am experiencing what life in Israel means. We meet lots of Israeli youth and it is wonderful to be surrounded by Jews everywhere."

**RONNIE OSHER** of Stamford: "I am having a remarkable experience of Jewish living which I did not have in Stamford. The contact with our historic places is exciting and makes the Bible alive for us."

**MARTY BAUER** of Montreal: "I am gaining a deeper insight into the various aspects of the education which I have received back home at school."

Ramot Shapira is situated at Moshav Beit Meir in the Jerusalem Hills, against the background of the Masrek Nature Reserve, alongside the "Burma Road" of the War of Liberation, overlooking the Ayalon Valley. It has modern dormitory and teaching quarters, as well as fine cultural and sports facilities. Since its establishment two years ago, in memory of Haim Moshe Shapira, 1,000 Israeli and 400 Diaspora youngsters have participated in its many programmes.

**HEDDA SEITZ** of Montreal: